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Contents

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	Edward the Peacemaker	9
II.	George V, Monarch and Man	25
III.	England and Foreign Affairs	34
IV.	Domestic Legislation under Edward VII and George V	52
V.	Tariff Reform	61
VI.	Colonial Progress	71
VII.	Unhappy Ireland	81
VIII.	The Making of the New Navy	94
IX.	The Advance of Women	102
X.	The Progress of Labour	108
XI.	The Beginning of the World War	118
XII.	From Aldershot to Mons	127
XIII.	The Great Retreat	136
XIV.	The First Battle of the Marne	148
XV.	The Agony of the Aisne	155
XVI.	The War on the Waters	161
XVII.	The Conflict Overseas	168
XVIII.	The Western Front in 1915	177

CHAPTER PAGE
XIX. The Gallipoli Gamble 187
XX. Overseas Campaigns of 1915 . . . 195
XXI. The Conflict on Land in 1916 . . 202
XXII. The Command of the Sea . . . 214
XXIII. The Battlefields of 1917 . . . 224
XXIV. The Year of Disaster and Deliverance 236
XXV. Winding up the World War . . . 252

List of Full-page Illustrations

PAGE

The King in France, with Prince of Wales and Staff 32

Delhi Durbar: The Proclamation, January 1, 1903 72

Ruins in Dublin, Easter 1916 88

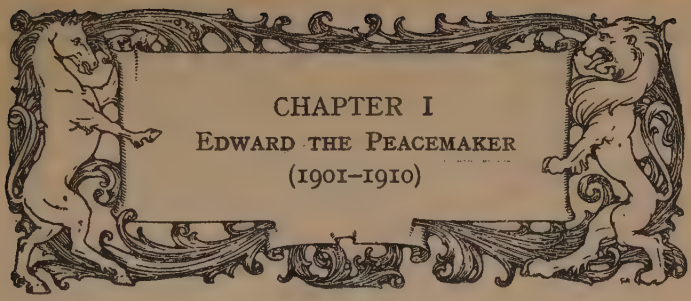
The Wreck of Liége 130

The Battle of the Aisne: A British Sap-Head at Dawn 156

Men of the "Sydney" cheering as the "Emden" sank 164

Incident in the Battle of Jutland: German Ship sinking 220

Entry of the Surrendered U-Boats into Harwich, November 20, 1918 248



CHAPTER I

EDWARD THE PEACEMAKER

(1901–1910)

EDWARD VII, known for many years as 'the first gentleman of Europe' in a sense that was as worthy as the same title borne by George IV was derogatory, succeeded his mother, Queen Victoria, on the 22nd January, 1901. On the following day, at his first Privy Council, he struck the keynote of his short but not unimportant reign. "In undertaking the heavy load which now devolves upon me," he said, "I am fully determined to be a constitutional monarch in the strictest sense of the word, and as long as there is breath in my body to work for the good and amelioration of my people."

It is not without its significance that the establishment of the Australian Commonwealth had been proclaimed at Sydney only a few weeks before, and that Edward VII was the first monarch to be called King of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions Beyond the Seas, Emperor of India. He had visited Canada and India when Prince of Wales, and no statesman recognized the paramount importance of a ready sympathy with the far-flung ramparts of the Empire better than he. That is why he

took a keen personal interest in the Bill which had for its object the inclusion in his title of those portions of territory which had hitherto not figured in it.

The King deplored his lack of knowledge of administrative details. Although he had attempted to become intimate with such matters, the late Queen had shown very conclusively that she was not disposed to grant him any special facilities. But if tradition ruled that as Prince he should not play a part in practical politics, he had what was of far greater value, an intimate knowledge of people and affairs, and had made it his purpose to get on friendly terms with leading statesmen, such as Beaconsfield and Gladstone, Rosebery and Dilke, and, less intimately, with Salisbury. Edward VII was essentially a man of the world in the best and truest sense. Without being far-seeing, a quality which he fully recognized as lacking in his mental make-up, he made it his duty to thoroughly understand the needs of the moment. Catholic in his tastes, many-sided in his interests, not too learned, addicted to sport, passionately fond of the sea, a lover of horses and a breeder of cattle, "a farmer on a small scale," as he once called himself, and inclined to walk on the sunny side of life rather than to seek the shade, the new monarch was essentially British in his dominating characteristics. There was, however, another trait in his character, likewise national objectively, though not subjectively. He had a deep-rooted belief in the necessity for upholding the dignity of sovereignty; hence pomp and pageantry, crimson velvet, gold lace, and royal ermine when occasion warranted it, such as the opening of Parlia-

ment, which he invariably attended in person. The coronation cost £359,289, and was a good advertisement, for Englishmen love a show. They also love simplicity, and were pleased that the King was well content to become the Squire of Sandringham and to dress in tweeds on occasion.

His geniality, which won him a host of friends and was never derogatory to his self-respect, proved one of the greatest assets of the Empire. At many Courts Edward VII was the best ambassador Britain ever had, although popular belief concerning much of his activity on the Continent was doubtless exaggerated. The foreign goodwill secured by England during his reign was not solely due to him; his part was rather to aid and abet, although M. Pichon, French Foreign Minister, speaking in Paris in April 1919, averred that Edward VII "contributed more than anyone to what we have called the *Entente Cordiale*, and to whom is due the eternal gratitude of the French Government and nation." Unlike his nephew, Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, he never indulged in sabre-rattling and dramatic moments. His faculty for accentuating good points rather than criticizing unpleasant qualities, for seeing the other fellow's point of view and showing that it was not really markedly dissimilar from his own, was perhaps his predominant characteristic. When he came to the throne the Empire was at war with the Boer Republics; he lived to see the Union of South Africa, and he left England in a far stronger position at his death than he had found it on his succession. There is no evidence that he had exerted any influence in determining the solution of difficulties in the Transvaal, though

the generous settlement of the problem had his cordial support. "It is my earnest hope," he said, on the 31st May, 1901, when peace was declared, "that by mutual co-operation and goodwill the bitter feelings of the past may speedily be replaced by ties of loyalty and friendship, and that an era of peace and prosperity may be in store for South Africa." Later in the year he received with marked cordiality the three principal Boer generals, Botha, De la Rey, and De Wet.

Without being in any sense a pacifist, Edward VII believed that most quarrels could be settled by conciliatory tactics. He was whole-heartedly antagonistic to that policy of 'splendid isolation' which had left the Empire without a friend on the Continent when Kruger threw down the gauntlet in 1899. The Kaiser's telegram to the Boer President at the time of the Jameson Raid, congratulating him on "maintaining the independence of your country against foreign aggression," had accentuated the growing mistrust of Germany in a large section of public opinion. The new King's visit to the deathbed of his sister, the Empress Frederick, had the effect of glossing over this dislike for a time. It has been said, perhaps with truth, that the impulsive nephew, though never enamoured of his uncle, was more than a trifle overawed by him. Lord Rosebery frankly confessed that "there is no parallel to the hatred and ill-will with which we are regarded almost unanimously by the peoples of Europe."

The King, who enjoyed the unique distinction of being the first heir to the British throne to land in the United States, retained to the end of his life the

qualities that appealed so much to President Buchanan. He had visited him during his tour in the great American Republic in 1860, when he had stood bare-headed before the statue of Washington, a symbolical act that was not forgotten in the dark days of the World War. The aged statesman had written to Queen Victoria that his royal visitor was "dignified, frank, and affable." His love of foreign travel, which almost amounted to a passion, was undoubtedly fostered by his many tours previous to his accession. Canada and the Holy Land, Egypt and Turkey, Greece and Russia, Germany and France, Spain and Portugal, Austria and India, Denmark and Rumania, had been visited by him. His views were by no means coloured by his mother's opinions. During the Franco-German War, for instance, his sympathies were pronouncedly French, while those of Queen Victoria were most decidedly German, as they usually were. "I know," she wrote soon after her consort died, "that our dear angel Albert always regarded a strong Prussia as a necessity, for which, therefore, it is a sacred duty for me to work."

Edward VII

Beyond having served on one or two Royal Commissions and shown a great deal of sympathy with the alleviation of suffering, Edward VII had really done little else previous to his coming to the throne

than to lay foundation stones, open exhibitions, and to take his mother's place at other more or less ornamental functions that she was too aged to attend. The Prince of Wales's Hospital Fund for London, inaugurated by him in honour of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, and subsequently renamed King Edward VII Hospital Fund, will probably remain his own best memorial.

That the King had much to do with the amicable relations that existed between Britain and the Powers during his reign cannot be gainsaid, even if it is granted that he did not bring treaties into actual being. Personality still counts in modern business, despite the fact that advertising has contributed to some extent in making it impersonal, and the visits of Edward VII to the various Courts of Europe cannot have failed to influence for good. Every year of his reign, with the single exception of 1902, when he received the King of Portugal in England, was marked by a visit to the Continent, a practice which aroused considerable disapproval on the part of certain members of the public, who apparently thought that the business of a king is to sit in Buckingham Palace all day for the sole purpose of interviewing statesmen and signing documents. A breezy American journalist once expressed this tersely when he characterized a monarch as "an animated rubber stamp." There may be a germ of truth in this humorous description, but it was not King Edward's idea of kingly duties. He realized that the prejudice of folk of the Malmesbury type, who had told George IV when Prince of Wales that he hoped no English prince would ever enter Calais save at the head of an army, contributed

in no small measure to international unrest and strife.

During his reign Edward VII visited the President of the French Republic no fewer than half a dozen times, the King of Italy twice, the German Emperor three times, the Emperor of Austria three times, the King of Denmark once, the King of Portugal once, King George of Greece once, the Tsar once, and the Pope once. Visits were paid to him by the King of Portugal, the King of Italy, the King of Spain, the King of Greece, the King of Norway, the German Emperor, President Fallières, the King of Sweden, and the King of Portugal. He also received the Khedive of Egypt, and Prince Arisuyawa of Japan.

In addition to being termed 'the first gentleman,' Edward VII was also 'the uncle' of Europe. Haakon VII was his son-in-law, and it has been stated with some show of authority that he owed the crown of Norway to the King's influence; his niece was Crown Princess of Sweden; his brother-in-law ascended the Danish throne in 1906; another brother-in-law was King of Greece; while Wilhelm II was his nephew, and his niece had married King Alfonso of Spain. The Tsar was also a relation by marriage.

The international outlook was by no means bright when Edward VII came into his inheritance. Differences of opinion regarding French interests in Egypt, Kitchener's firm dealing with Major Marchand at Fashoda, the Dreyfus *affaire*, and the South African War had embittered France and England; Russia was certainly not cordial; and Germany had recently renewed suspicions by comments in the Press on our military operations in South Africa and the conduct

of our soldiers in the campaign. Paris was still nursing her real or fancied grievances against this country when the King paid his first visit as a monarch in May 1903. He had just been welcomed by the King of Portugal, whose subjects he had delighted by a tactful reference in a speech to the maintaining of the "integrity" of the possessions of the respective countries, thus discounting a rumour that Britain intended to annex Delagoa Bay. Passing on to Italy, he had been received with warmth by King Victor, to whose Prime Minister he had said, "Our two countries have one great principle in common—liberty; one great object in view—peace." He had also taken the opportunity of an audience with Pope Leo XIII.

The magnetic personality of Edward VII is wonderfully illustrated by the sequence of events during his brief stay in Paris on this occasion. On 1st May he was met at the Bois de Boulogne railway station by President Loubet and the staff of the British Embassy. His passage to the Embassy was not broken by a solitary French cheer; what word of greeting was given came from a few of his subjects who happened to be about at the time. Cannons boomed and bunting was displayed—they were rather the outward sign of inward hostility than of genuine appreciation. A less good-natured or a tactless man would either have shown his displeasure or promptly departed from a place where he was very obviously unwanted. Not so his Majesty. He maintained his buoyancy of spirits, beamed on the people whether they liked it or not, and showed in the afternoon that ill-will counted for nought. "The days of conflict between these two countries," he

remarked in a speech to a deputation from the British Chamber of Commerce, "are, I trust, happily over, and I hope that future historians, in alluding to Anglo-French relations in the present century, may be able to record only a friendly rivalry in the fields of commercial and industrial development, and that in the future, as in the past, England and France may be regarded as the champions and founders of peaceful progress and civilization, and as the home of all that is best in literature, art, and science. Our Divine Providence has designed that France should be our near neighbour, and, I hope, always a dear friend. There are no two countries in the world whose mutual prosperity is more dependent on each other. There may have been misunderstandings and causes of dissension in the past, but all such differences are, I believe, happily removed and forgotten, and I trust that the friendship and admiration which we all feel for the French nation and their glorious traditions may, in the near future, develop into a sentiment of the warmest affection and attachment between the people of the two countries. The achievement of this end is my constant desire, and, gentlemen, I count upon your institution, and each of its members severally who reside in this beautiful city and enjoy the hospitality of the French Republic, to aid and assist me in the attainment of this object."

In the evening, at the Théâtre Française, he was greeted with silence on his entry; when he left the building a little crowd gave him a parting cheer. On the following day he braved the Anglophobe lions in their den at the Hôtel de Ville. It was an exceedingly bold stroke of policy, and not a little

disconcerting to the lions. A few hours later, at a dinner at the Elysée, he again advocated friendship between France and Great Britain. The excellent impression made by that speech, and by the report of the one he had addressed to the British deputation, coupled with his genial manner and air of *bonhomie*, was reflected by the hearty reception accorded to him when he went to the Opera. The magnificent building resounded with shouts of "*Vive le Roi!*" "*Vive l'Angleterre!*" When, after his brief four days' visit, he set out for the Gare des Invalides on his homeward journey, the route was crowded by Parisians, who showed their enthusiasm in no uncertain manner. The lightning change in public opinion was little short of miraculous. With tactful and characteristic courtesy he telegraphed to the President at Cherbourg: "Before leaving French soil I wish once more to thank you very warmly for the friendly reception that you, your Government, and the people have accorded me in France and during my stay in Paris, the remembrance of which will never fade from my memory." To this M. Loubet replied: "I am truly delighted at the good impression your Majesty has carried away as the result of your visit to France, and I most warmly thank your Majesty for the sentiments so kindly manifested toward the French people and Government."

When President Loubet, accompanied by M. Hanotaux, the Foreign Minister, returned the King's visit two months later, it was abundantly evident that the British people heartily shared their monarch's desire to establish an *Entente Cordiale*—literally a friendly understanding. M. Loubet left London with

the draft of the proposed arrangement in his pocket, and the actual agreement, called the Anglo-French Convention, was signed on April 8, 1904. Fear of Germany had largely prompted the alliance of France with Russia in 1896, and the amicable relations now entered into with Great Britain, after a long period of enmity and suspicion, were felt to be a source of added strength against the menace of the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria, and Italy. Proof of the practical utility of the *Entente* was furnished in 1905, when Germany adopted a threatening attitude toward France, Russia, by reason of her disastrous war against Japan, being virtually powerless. Kaiser Wilhelm II took the opportunity to challenge the rights of France in Morocco, and matters were strained almost to breaking-point. When England showed that she had every intention to respect the Anglo-French Convention by supporting France, and Italy showed more sympathy with the latter than with her avowed ally, the Emperor agreed to the holding of a conference at Algeciras, near Gibraltar, to discuss the question in dispute. It ended in a compromise. The German Emperor recognized the French claim, but M. Delcassé, the French Foreign Minister who had signed the *Entente* with England, was dismissed, and France ceded to Germany some 102,300 square miles of the French Congo adjoining the German district of Cameroon.

In July 1905, when the Morocco affair loomed large in the public eye, the British Atlantic Fleet visited Brest, where it was entertained by the French Navy. It was an excellent, if fairly obvious, diplomatic stroke. The visit was returned in August, the King

reviewing the squadron and giving a dinner on board the royal yacht to Admiral Caillard and his officers. Every year until his death Edward VII went to Paris, sometimes twice, his last visit being in April 1909.

Despite his attempts toward a good understanding between the Island Empire and Germany, mutual suspicion more or less existed throughout the King's reign, though his tact may have helped to stem the impending avalanche during his lifetime. The firm hand shown by Great Britain in the matter of the Morocco question was a source of irritation to a large section of the German nation, as was the refusal of the British Government to assist in the proposed Baghdad railway, while the determination of Germany to enter into rivalry with the Mistress of the Seas as a naval Power was not lost on those at home. The King sought to pour oil on the troubled waters. During his visit to Kiel in June 1904 he declared that his sincere wish was that the two flags might "float beside one another to the most distant time, as they float to-day, for the maintenance of peace, and for the well-being, not only of our own countries, but of all nations." The Anglo-German Arbitration Treaty was signed in the following month. In 1907 King and Kaiser saw each other twice, and the return visit of the Emperor was marked by great cordiality on the part of Londoners, who turned out in their thousands to greet him whenever he was visible. Edward VII paid his last visit to Germany in February 1909.

The relations of Britain with Russia had furnished some anxious moments during the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5), when British sympathy was naturally

with the Japanese, with whom an alliance had been entered into in 1902, Great Britain agreeing to support the latter if attacked by more than one Power.

The Dogger Bank incident of October 1904, when a division of Admiral Rozhdestvensky's Baltic Fleet, on its way to the Pacific, had opened fire on a number of Hull fishing-smacks in the belief that Japanese torpedo-boats were sheltering among them, was a grievance that did not quickly subside. On that occasion a smack had been shelled and sunk, and two fishermen killed and eighteen wounded. Fortunately the storm was weathered, and although feeling ran high at the time, there was no resort to arms.

The autocratic methods of the Tsar and the bureaucracy were entirely alien to British sympathy. Secret police, strikes, massacres, the suppression of Finnish liberties, were too reminiscent of old-time Muscovy to arouse anything but antipathy, to say nothing of the suspicion of an advance upon India. At the same time it was fairly evident that the *Entente* with France must of necessity lead to a similar understanding with her ally if it were ever to be something more practical than a mere sentiment of goodwill.

Notwithstanding considerable opposition, an Anglo-Russian Convention was brought about in August 1907. British statesmen supplied the cement, and Edward VII cordially co-operated by assisting to point the bricks of the structure. Russian influence in Afghanistan, hitherto a perpetual nightmare, was removed by ruling that country outside the Tsar's sphere of influence. Great Britain agreed to recognize Russia's interests in North Persia, while the other

party to the agreement admitted Britain's interests in the territory bordering on India. Both Powers undertook not to interfere with Thibet. In the early summer of 1908 Edward VII met the Tsar at Reval, and a year later members of the Duma—Parliament we should call it—and of the Russian Imperial Council visited London and were sympathetically received by him. When the Tsar was met by the King in August 1909, signs of disapproval were manifest in the House of Commons, but the clamour gradually subsided. In 1914 it was the 'Russian steam-roller' that helped to save France, though it broke down later. On the death of Edward VII, M. Isvolsky, the Russian Foreign Minister, remarked: "We have lost the mainstay of our foreign policy."

The pacific influences of Edward VII were also extended to the third party of the Triple Alliance. He had cherished a warm affection for the Emperor Francis Joseph since their first meeting when he was Prince of Wales, and during his stay in Vienna in 1903 he appointed his host a Field-Marshal of the British Army—a graceful compliment to both Emperor and subjects.

In these several ways King Edward VII, by his courtesy and common sense, his geniality and unfailing tact, sought to play his part in the promotion of peace and goodwill. In this direction he supported the policy of his several Governments. He travelled without a portfolio, for the monarchy of Great Britain is limited and circumscribed, but history has already given him a prominent niche in its gallery as one of those enviable men who have helped to make the crooked straight and the rough places plain.

At the passing of the Peacemaker many eloquent tributes were paid to his predominant work as a promoter of concord, not the least sincere being that of Lord Lansdowne, who had done much to develop the *Entente Cordiale.* He very happily referred to Edward VII as a symbol of Imperial unity, and added that he had established relations with the heads and public men of other states which had enabled him to bear a distinguished and useful part in international affairs. Mr H. H. Asquith, Prime Minister, remarked that the King's "powerful influence was steadily and assiduously directed to the avoidance, not only of war, but of the causes and pretexts of war, and the title by which he would always be remembered was 'Peacemaker of the World.'" Mr A. J. Balfour said that while the late monarch ought not to be regarded as a dexterous diplomatist, the incalculable gift of personality enabled him to embody in the eyes of all men the friendly policy of Great Britain, and that was why he had been able to do so great a work in bringing the nations together. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Premier of the Dominion of Canada, also referred to his Majesty's "efforts on behalf of international harmony and goodwill." The Parliament of the Australian Commonwealth telegraphed that "the whole of the civilized world has lost a friend and its greatest peacemaker." The Dutch Government referred to his "efforts for the good of humanity."

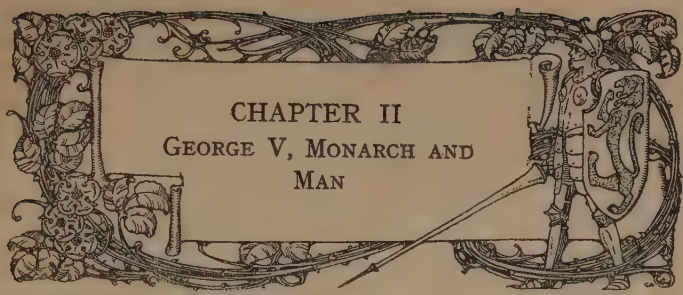
When Edward VII ascended the throne he declared that it was "late in life to begin a new trade." He proved that it was not too late. In the nine years of his all too brief reign he contributed largely to the solution of problems of Imperial and foreign policy.

He left the Empire at peace and the United Kingdom in the throes of a great constitutional crisis.

The end came suddenly, though it is evident that he had not been in robust health for some time. He had been operated on for appendicitis in June 1902, necessitating the postponement of the coronation, he was diabetic, and he had throat trouble. He left for the Continent on March 7, 1910. At Biarritz he seemed to get better, and on his arrival at Buckingham Palace on the 27th of the following month he at once returned to his desk. He went to the Opera, visited the Royal Academy, journeyed to Sandringham, and returned to London. On May 5 the general public had the first intimation that the King was unwell. He was "suffering from an attack of bronchitis." The second bulletin, issued next day, stated that his Majesty's condition "gives rise to grave anxiety." He got up, worked and smoked a little, fainted in his chair, and refused to go to bed. With the dogged determination of his mother, he said to his doctors after they had administered oxygen, "No, I shall not give in; I shall go on; I shall work to the end." During the night he got gradually weaker, but he rallied sufficiently to speak. "I have done my duty" —words so reminiscent of Nelson—was his last utterance. On May 6, 1910, at 11.45 p.m., the Peacemaker passed to that place

> Where everlasting Spring abides,
> And never-withering flowers.

After lying in state in Westminster Hall, the remains were taken to Windsor and placed in the crypt beneath the chancel of St George's Chapel.



CHAPTER II
George V, Monarch and Man

DURING his father's lifetime the personality of George V had been largely overshadowed by that of his extremely popular parent. Before the death of his elder brother, the Duke of Clarence, he was scarcely known to the public. That sad event in the early days of 1892 made him necessarily a much more conspicuous figure. It transformed him from a naval commander of promise to Heir-Presumptive. The change meant much to the Prince personally, for he had served in the Navy from boyhood, and was greatly attached to the Service. He had a sailor's preference for salt water, but he entered into his new duties whole-heartedly.

Of a more serious turn of mind than his father, Prince George sought to study Imperial questions from every point of view—'inside and outside,' to use an expressive colloquialism. It involved precise methods and called for an intimate knowledge of some at least of the manifold aspects of human nature. His training at sea, besides his own bent of mind, made him as keenly wedded to duty as was Nelson; but whereas the hero of Trafalgar had a certain intuitive genius which enabled him to solve a problem

without laborious calculation, the Prince's method was slower. "Be thorough," he advised on one occasion. "Whatever you do, do it as well as you can. Put your whole heart and soul into it." Similar advice has been given a thousand times, but not always as the result of experience or of practice.

That the Prince took keen interest in the welfare of the Empire was shown by his frequent visits to the gallery of the House of Commons. When he became Duke of York (1893) and took his seat in the Upper Chamber he showed considerably more pleasure in Parliamentary debates than in Court functions.

A certain portion of his father's work, such as stone-laying and the opening of public institutions, was delegated to him, and the Duke speedily proved himself to be something more than an understudy. When he married the popular Princess Mary of Teck in 1893 public enthusiasm was roused to the highest pitch.

In 1901 the Duke and Duchess made a memorable voyage in the *Ophir* to Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, and Newfoundland. Some 50,000 miles of land and sea were traversed, and twenty-eight speeches delivered. The Duke showed himself thoroughly democratic, and won golden opinions wherever he went. He understood full well that when dignity 'stoops' to the ordinary deeds of ordinary men it really elevates itself. Thus when the *Ophir* crossed the line and the time-honoured custom of ducking the sailors was performed, the Duke was tumbled into the tank along with the bluejackets.

In Australia the Royal party drank 'billy' tea

and ate 'dampers,' according to the wont of the squatter. In golden Canada, despite impressive ceremonies, there were relaxations and uncommon experiences. The Duke and Duchess lunched in a lumberman's log-hut, travelled in a birch-bark canoe, sat on the cow-catcher of a locomotive, and were entertained at a reception by the Blackfeet Indians, who squatted on the ground and smoked their pipes of peace. In the picturesque language so beloved by these sons of Nature, the Heir-Apparent gave them a little address which delighted the listeners beyond measure and showed delightful tact on the part of the speaker.

"The Indian," he remarked, "is a true man, and his words are true words, and he never breaks them. He knows that it is the same with the great King, my father, and with those whom he sends to carry out his wishes. His promises last as long as the sun shall shine and the waters shall flow, and care will ever be taken that nothing shall come between the love that there is between the great King and you, his faithful children."

On the 9th November, 1901, the Duke was created Prince of Wales. On his return to England he made his famous 'Wake up' speech at a commemorative banquet given at the Guildhall by the City of London. Scarcely less important was a message which is still so true that it may well be quoted here:

"No one who has had the privilege of enjoying the experiences which we had during our tour could fail to be struck with one all-prevailing and pressing demand—the want of population. Even in the oldest of our Colonies [Newfoundland] there were abundant

signs of this want. There are great tracts of country still unexplored, hidden wealth calling for development, vast tracts of virgin soil ready to yield profitable returns to settlers; and all this can be enjoyed under conditions of healthy life, liberal laws, and free institutions in exchange for the overcrowded cities and almost hopeless struggle for existence which, alas! too often is the lot of many in this country. But one condition, and one only, is made by our Colonial brethren, and that is: 'Send us suitable emigrants.' I would go further, and appeal to my fellow-countrymen at home to prove the strength of the attachment of the Motherland to her children by sending them only of her best. By these means we may still further strengthen—or, at all events, pass on unimpaired—that pride of race, that community of sentiment and purpose, that feeling of common loyalty and obligation which knit together and alone can maintain the integrity of our Empire."

A voyage to India, undertaken in 1905, was made in the battleship *Renown*, which was specially fitted up for the purpose. Only those who have travelled in the Orient can appreciate the pomp and circumstance which Eastern potentates love to display to exalted personages. Pageants and reviews succeeded each other for four and a half months. From the point of view of the Imperial traveller, the tour was "an unending and unbroken series of happy and most instructive experiences." On his return, the Prince of Wales again 'spoke his mind' at the Mansion House.

"I cannot help thinking," he said, "from all I have heard and seen, that the task of governing India will

be made the easier if we, on our part, infuse into it a wider element of sympathy." It was the utterance not only of a statesman but of a humanitarian. Here let it be added that King George V prepares his own speeches. They are not the remarks of another, uttered by him gramophone-fashion, but the conscientious convictions of the speaker, framed in his own well-chosen words.

George V therefore began his reign with an intimate and recent acquaintance with the ideas and ideals of his scattered Empire. If proof were needed that his sympathy with their aspirations was reciprocated, the stupendous effort of the Dominions and Colonies during the World War is surely sufficient answer. Lord Fisher once remarked that in his opinion King George was the best-informed sailor in Europe. In addition to his practical experience of the Navy, his Majesty has literally digested hundreds of volumes, both English and foreign, on naval subjects, and he also possesses a number of books crowded with newspaper cuttings on ships, sailors, and the sea, many of them of a highly technical nature. Any idea that while he served in the Navy he was 'let down gently' would be totally erroneous. When he was on the North American and West Indian station an American sought permission to look over his ship. This was granted, and a young officer who bore unmistakable evidence of having recently taken part in the operation of coaling showed him round. On returning to shore in a pinnace the visitor expressed himself as delighted, but regretted that he had not seen the Prince. "But you have been talking to him for the best part of an hour!" retorted

the officer in charge. "Was that the Prince?" said the American, in profound astonishment. "No wonder he laughed so heartily when I asked him if they kept his Royal Highness in cotton-wool while the coal-dust was flying about!"

During the Kaiser's last visit to England, at the unveiling of the Queen Victoria Memorial facing Buckingham Palace, the King sought to dispel the suspicion that Britain nursed an inveterate hatred of Germany. He publicly held out the hand of fellowship.

"It is a source of deep satisfaction to me and to my family," he said, "that my dear cousin the German Emperor, accompanied by the Empress, is present at this historic ceremony. His Imperial Majesty is the eldest grandson of Queen Victoria, whom he always loved and venerated with natural affection, and his presence and sympathy with us during the last days of her life and afterward will never be forgotten by me and my people. Strong and loving ties of kinship and friendship unite our thrones and persons. The nation rejoices with me that he is here to-day to share in the unveiling of this Memorial."

Not without reason George V has been called the First Imperialist King of England. No monarch has ever worked more conscientiously, or with more painstaking and thoughtful care. He is immensely efficient in the discharge of business, and no great lover of pomp and circumstance. When the storm of 1914 was brewing he played a worthy part in attempting to stay the disaster by addressing the Tsar personally, as he had done only two or three weeks before in the matter of Ireland by summoning leaders of the various political parties to Buckingham

Palace to urge upon them the necessity of a speedy settlement. Both efforts failed, but in neither case could the lack of success be attributed to the monarch's lack of foresight or of solicitude for the welfare of his subjects. Just before the first Expeditionary Force left England the King told its members that their welfare would be never absent from his thoughts, that he would pray God to bless and guard them and bring them back victorious, and he meant exactly what he said.

In addition to the work of interviewing Ministers and other personages, reading and signing documents, attending to correspondence and the thousand and one details of the business of kingship, the World War brought with it a constant succession of investitures, visits to hospitals, camps, munition factories, shipbuilding yards, aircraft works, armament and commercial centres, and also to "the Forces of the Crown" on active service. Before 1914 was over he had been to France, where he inspected army corps, saw some of the fighting, met President Poincaré, discussed the situation with the Allied generals, and often travelled many miles in driving rain and piercing cold. On his second visit (1915) to the Western Front the mare he was riding fell over and seriously injured one of his Majesty's legs. When in the ambulance train he personally invested Lance-Sergeant O. Brooks, of the Coldstream Guards, with the Victoria Cross. In 1916 he was again in France, and toured not only the battlefields of the previous months but also those where the bitter contest was going on. He was accompanied by the Prince of Wales, who had been gazetted aide-de-camp to Sir

John French in November 1914, and won golden opinions of the troops by his disregard of danger and unfailing geniality. On his fourth visit in 1917 the King was accompanied by the Queen, whose loving sympathy for the wounded had endeared her to all hearts. Immediately on his return George V issued a proclamation declaring that the name of Windsor would be borne by his Royal House and Family, and relinquishing the use of all German titles and dignities. His final journey to France was undertaken in March 1918, when affairs were far from well with Britain and her Allies, but he sent a genial message to Sir Douglas Haig. He was "proud of the British race and of that unconquerable spirit which will, please God, bring us through our present trials."

The Sailor King did not neglect Britain's "sure shield," though it was not until the summer of 1915 that he went to see the Grand Fleet. Three other visits were paid previous to the signing of the Armistice, on which day he penned a cordial expression of "praise and thankfulness to the officers, men, and women of the Royal Navy and Marines, with their comrades of the Fleet auxiliaries and Mercantile Marine, who for more than four years have kept open the seas, protected our shores, and given us safety. . . . With full and grateful hearts the peoples of the British Empire salute the White, the Red, and the Blue Ensigns, and those who have given their lives for the Flag. I am proud to have served in the Navy. I am prouder still to be its Head on this memorable day."

Careful readers will note the chivalrous tribute to

The King in France, with Prince of Wales and Staff
F. Matania

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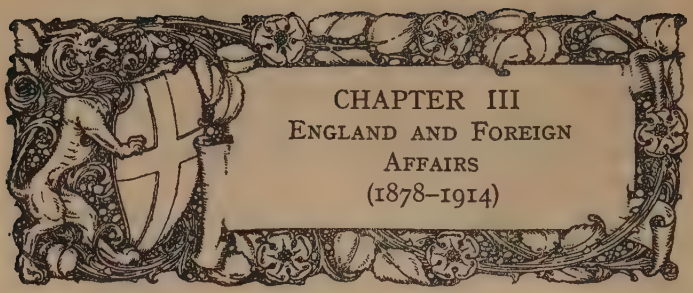
the "women of the Royal Navy"—a new note in an old Service. Nine days afterward his Majesty, the Queen, and the Heir-Apparent reviewed the mighty squadrons as they lay at Rosyth preparatory to receiving the surrender of the greater part of the German High Sea Fleet.

Practical schemes for social reform, particularly those connected with better housing for the working classes, have the King's unqualified sympathy. He has appealed for a healthy race in healthy homes, a noble ideal that can only be reached by "a great offensive against disease and crime by a vigorous attack on the unhealthy, ugly, overcrowded house in the mean street."



CHAPTER III
England and Foreign Affairs (1878–1914)

FROM the conclusion of the Crimean War in 1856 until the breaking out of hostilities in 1914 Great Britain had no occasion to send an Expeditionary Force to the Continent. Dull rumblings were heard from time to time, but there was fortunately no clash of arms. For many years Russia and France were the sinister figures that threatened to disturb the unstable see-saw of British diplomacy. Beaconsfield's fear of the former Power nearly led to conflict in 1878. Three years before, the Eastern Question had again been raised in an acute form by an insurrection in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the western provinces of Turkey. Montenegro, wholly independent, and Serbia, only partly so, took up arms in 1876 against 'the unspeakable Turk.' Bulgaria, another province of Turkey, also tried to break her shackles, and terrible massacres ensued. Mr Evelyn Baring (later Earl Cromer) reported that "the way in which the rising was suppressed was inhuman in the last degree—fifty innocent persons suffering for every guilty one"; but when Kitchener passed through Turkey in 1877 he formed the opinion that the Bulgarians "seem to be a most despicable race. Morally

they appear to be at the lowest ebb; and if some of those who agitated about the Bulgarian atrocities really saw and talked to the people, they would, I feel sure, modify their opinions." The atrocities drew from Mr Gladstone a powerful pamphlet entitled *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East.* He contended that we ought to drive the Turkish Government "bag and baggage" out of Europe.

In April 1877 Russia declared war, and was joined by the half-independent province of Rumania. Despite several defeats, the Russian advance on Constantinople compelled the Porte to make peace by the Treaty of San Stefano, which virtually meant the end of Turkish rule in Europe. Disraeli, fearing Russia, and supported by a large body of British public opinion whose anti-Turkish sympathies had cooled, held the view that the treaty must be referred to a Congress of the Powers. To support his contention the British Fleet was sent to Constantinople, the Reserves were called out, and 5000 Indian troops were dispatched to Malta. Lord Derby, the Foreign Minister, did not see eye to eye with Disraeli, and resigned, his post being given to Lord Salisbury.

Russia agreed to the proposed Congress, which was held at Berlin, with Bismarck as 'honest broker.' Just previous to the assemblage of diplomats at the Radziwill Palace, the Cyprus Convention was signed, and regarded as a great triumph for Beaconsfield. Its only important article runs as follows: "If Batoum, Ardahan, Kars [on the Armenian frontier], or any of them, shall be retained by Russia, or if any attempt shall be made at any future time by Russia to take possession of any further territories of H.I.M. the

Sultan in Asia, as fixed by the definite treaty of peace, England engages to join H.I.M. the Sultan in defending them by force of arms. In return H.I.M. the Sultan promises to England to introduce necessary reforms, to be agreed upon later by the two Powers, into the government and for the protection of the Christian and other subjects of the Porte in these territories; and, in order to enable England to make necessary provisions for executing her engagement, H.I.M. the Sultan further consents to assign the island of Cyprus to be occupied and administered by England." This arrangement obtained until the 5th November, 1914, when Turkey definitely allied herself with Germany. The island was thereupon annexed.

As a result of the Berlin Congress, Montenegro, Serbia, Rumania, and Bulgaria north of the Balkans secured their independence; the administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina was to be controlled by Austria. The 'sick man of Europe' failed to reform, and Russian enmity against Britain was secured for a generation; but Beaconsfield returned with what was deemed to be 'peace with honour.' Salisbury afterward declared that in supporting Turkey against Russia we had "backed the wrong horse." In October 1908 Bosnia and Herzegovina were incorporated in the Empire of Austria-Hungary, and Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria threw over Turkish suzerainty, assuming the title of Tsar. Against these measures Britain protested ineffectively. Crete seized the opportunity to unite with Greece.

Brief reference has been made to the Dogger Bank incident of 1904. France did much to bring about

an amicable settlement, an international Commission of Admirals based on the lines laid down by the Hague Convention, but with extended powers, meeting at Paris in January 1905 for the purpose of inquiring into the untoward affair. The Russian contention was that Admiral Rozhdestvensky had fired "in the legitimate accomplishment of the military duties of the chief of a fleet, and that consequently no responsibility could possibly rest upon him or his subordinates." The Commission found that no blame whatever was attached to the British trawlers, which were obeying the rules of the sea, carrying the regulation lights, and had committed no hostile act. The majority of the Commission held that the Russian Admiral was responsible for opening fire, which was not justifiable, and the consequent results. On the other hand, the opinion was expressed that Rozhdestvensky personally did all he could to prevent the trawlers from being the targets of the Russian fire when they were recognized. He was held blameless for steaming off without attempting to lend assistance, and it was declared that nothing had been done to discredit the "military value" or humanity of the Admiral and his fleet. The sum of £65,000, which was £38,000 less than the original assessment of the British Government, was paid by Russia in compensation, and the Tsar expressed his regrets. It is perhaps almost unnecessary to add that the verdict did much to discredit the worth of international arbitration.

There was a period of tension with the French in 1893, when the relations between France and Siam seemed likely to lead to war between the Republic and Britain over the territory in dispute, which

threatened British interests. The tactful handling of the matter by Lord Rosebery eased the situation, and in 1896 a treaty was entered into guaranteeing the integrity of territory recognized as belonging to Siam. The influence of France in the eastern and of Britain in the western portions of the country was mutually agreed. A further treaty was made in 1907. Trouble also arose in connexion with Nigeria, and was not finally overcome till 1898.

Immediately following the victorious conclusion of the Sudan campaign of 1896–8 a further difficulty arose. Less than a week after the triumphal entry of British and Egyptian troops into Omdurman Kitchener received intelligence that Fashoda, on the White Nile, had been occupied. Setting out with two steamers, one of which was commanded by Lieutenant David Beatty, and a small body of troops, the victorious general found that Major J. B. Marchand, with seven Frenchmen and 120 Senegalese, had hoisted the tricolour and proclaimed the provinces of Bahr-el-Ghazal and Fashoda as French territory.

While the Sirdar regarded the claim as ludicrous, he wrote to Sir Evelyn Baring that "It is impossible not to entertain the highest admiration of the courage, devotion, and indomitable spirit displayed by M. Marchand's expedition; but our general impression was one of astonishment that an attempt should have been made to carry out a project of such magnitude and danger by the dispatch of so small and ill-equipped a force, which—as their commander remarked to me—was neither in a position to resist a second dervish attack nor to retire; indeed, had our destruction of the Khalifa's power at Omdurman been

delayed for a fortnight, in all probability he and his companions would have been massacred."

Kitchener hoisted the Egyptian flag, but failed to persuade Major Marchand to withdraw. The matter then passed to the Home Government. Lord Salisbury adopted a very firm attitude, and the 'Fashoda incident,' as it was called, was settled amicably. The gallant officer and explorer retired, and France relinquished all claim to the Egyptian Sudan.

From the formation of the German Empire until 1914, Germany was unquestionably the predominant Power in Europe. Apart from the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria, and Italy, which in 1895 Bismarck proudly said "approximately covers the old empire claimed by the successors of Charlemagne after the separation of Gaul, the France of to-day," Wilhelm II voiced in no uncertain way the ambitions of the nation for an overseas empire, a powerful navy in addition to an enormous army, and an ever-increasing commerce. His frequent excursions and alarums set Europe by the ears on many occasions. "The German people," said Prince Bülow, "do not want a shadow Kaiser; they want a Kaiser who does things." Whereas the colonies of other great Powers had been gradually acquired in the course of centuries, Germany sought to obtain her possessions in the world's dark corners in a hurry, and did so. She became Britain's keenest competitor in the shipping business. The Emperor, the Press, the Pan-German Union, her professors and her politicians all combined to inculcate in the receptive and willing minds of the public that their destiny was to become an all-powerful people. Duty to the State for the good

of the State became the supreme gospel. "Beyond all question," wrote Dr Ernst Hasse, "the German people now hold the first place in arts and sciences." Professor Fritz Bley added that not only were they "the most accomplished people" in things that pertained to the intellect, but "the best settlers, the best seamen, and the best merchants. The modern world owes to us Germans pretty well everything in the way of great achievements that it has to show. Ours is the future, for we are young."

German South-West Africa began with a trading factory in 1883, whose founder, a Bremen merchant, obtained a concession from the local chief of 215 square miles. The process of annexation gradually developed until the colony embraced no fewer than 322,450 square miles. Togoland and Cameroon were shortly afterward added with a total area of 333,700 square miles. German East Africa covered 384,000 square miles. Elsewhere she secured Samoa, Kaiser Wilhelmsland, and the Pacific Islands, the Bismarck Archipelago, the Caroline, Pelew, Marianne, and Marshall Islands, Savaii and Upolo, in the Samoan group, and Kiao-Chau, in China. Her overseas empire became about five times as large in area as the Fatherland, and contained some 14,000,000 natives. In 1901, when Prussia celebrated the bi-centenary of her establishment as a kingdom, Wilhelm II took the opportunity to remind his soldiers of a saying of Frederick the Great: "The world does not rest more securely on the shoulders of Atlas than the Prussian State on the shoulders of the Army." As for the German Navy, "the trident must be in our fist."

The Kaiser had encouraged the Tsar in his ill-

advised campaign against Japan, and at the same time had seized the opportunity of still further ingratiating himself in the goodwill of the Sultan. Both the Anglo-French *Entente* of 1904 and the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907 were deeply resented in Berlin, and attempts were made to shatter them. The Morocco affair of 1905, which incidentally revived the military spirit in France, and the crisis of 1911, when the *Panther*, a German gunboat, was sent to Agadir, a southern port of Morocco, as a provocation, under the excuse of protecting the persons and property of German merchants, are cases in point. On both occasions Britain told Germany that should necessity arise she would support France. When Bosnia and Herzegovina were annexed to Austria, and Russia asked for compensations for Serbia, the mailed fist was extended in a threatening attitude, but failed to shake the Triple Entente. During the Balkan War of 1912, when Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria sought to smash Turkey and nearly succeeded, Austria persuaded Bulgaria to attack her allies over the matter of her share of territory. The interest of Russia in the Balkans, and England's known opposition to her policy there, no doubt entered into this crafty plot, but it failed to mature. Russia kept out of the conflict, and the Triple Entente was not rent asunder.

Korea ceased to be the Hermit Nation in 1876 by reason of Japan's demand to trade with her. Other nations followed in due course, and eventually Japan and China became keen rivals for influence. Various events gradually led up to a conflagration, and in 1894 the two countries went to war, the result being entirely in favour of Japan. In the peace terms Japan

was granted a slice of Manchuria, including Port Arthur. At the behest of Germany, France, and Russia, the conqueror gave up the claim to the cession of territory on the payment of a further sum in addition to the original indemnity. Germany immediately seized the opportunity to come to a secret arrangement with Russia in the matter of China, for the purpose of development. In pursuance of this policy of 'peaceful penetration,' Germany in 1898 secured Kiao-Chau and the greater part of the province of Shantung on a ninety-nine years' lease, ostensibly as a solatium for the murder of a couple of missionaries, and Russia obtained a shorter lease of Port Arthur. These episodes were not forgotten by Japan in after years. Kwang-chau-Wan was leased to France, and Wei-hai-wei to Great Britain, whose policy during the Chino-Japanese War had been merely one of sympathy toward Japan. England was not altogether disposed to see Germany impinging on her interests.

It is small matter for surprise that a certain section of the community bethought themselves of a possible China for the Chinese. The extermination of Christianity and of the commerce of European nations in the Yellow Kingdom was the principal item on the programme of a patriotic society called the Boxers, which made itself felt in no uncertain measure in 1900. This anti-foreign organization was largely brought about by the peaceful activities of missionaries, and the more aggressive measures of enterprising Westerners who had secured mining and railway concessions in various districts of a vast country, whose inhabitants for the most part were conservative by

tradition and inclination. The murder of the German Minister at Pekin and the siege of the Legations led to the dispatch of an international relief expedition by Britain, France, Germany, Russia, the United States, and Japan. Although the German forces from Europe did not reach China until the relief of the officials at Pekin, the allied army was put under the command of Count von Waldersee. It was when bidding his soldiers and sailors farewell that the Kaiser made his famous reference to the Huns of Attila, whence the term Huns for Germans during the World War. "When you meet the foe," he said, "you will defeat him. No quarter will be given, no prisoners will be taken. Let all who fall into your hands be at your mercy. Just as the Huns a thousand years ago, under the leadership of Attila, gained a reputation in virtue of which they still live in historical tradition, so may the name of Germany become known in such a manner in China that no Chinaman will ever again dare to look askance at a German." £64,000,000 was paid as indemnity by China to the Powers chiefly concerned.

In 1902 England and Japan entered into a defensive alliance, which was renewed in 1911. This arrangement, to quote the words of Baron Kato, "has for its object the consolidation and maintenance of general peace in Eastern Asia and the maintenance of the independence and integrity of China, as well as the principle of equal opportunities for commerce and industry for all nations in that country, and the maintenance and defence respectively of territorial rights and special interests of contracting parties in Eastern Asia." The reason why Britain did not go

to war with Russia when Japan was fighting her in 1904–5 was that England only guaranteed support if her ally was attacked by more than one Power. Russian activities in Manchuria, despite a promise of evacuation, and also in Korea, directly threatening Japanese interests, led to the dread arbitrament of war. The victory of a yellow race over a Western Power was a rude awakening for Europe, and at the time opened up a vista of exceedingly unenviable possibilities.

South America was also regarded by Germany as likely to offer her that 'place in the sun' for which she so ardently longed. During the Spanish-American War (1898) she endeavoured to embroil Britain with the United States, fortunately without success, and she peacefully penetrated Rio Grande do Sul until Brazil took alarm and informed her North American neighbour. Having in view the maintenance of the Monroe Doctrine, which proceeded from a declaration made in 1823 that the United States would hold it unfriendly in the European Powers to take aggressive action in the American continent, the United States added considerably to the strength of her Navy during the years 1890–95, and the idea of expansion on a large scale in that part of the world was dropped for the time being by Germany.

To satisfy her overweening ambition it was necessary for Germany to have a big navy, and it is not uninteresting to note that the nucleus of her fleet was presented to the King of Prussia by the British Government in 1814, during the visit of the Allied sovereigns to Portsmouth. On that occasion the King blandly remarked to Tsar Alexander, "You

will not be jealous of my fleet." Wilhelm II learnt what he knew of seamanship on a former English frigate, and the training-ships *Niobe* and *Renown* at Wilhelmshaven were transferred from the Royal Navy. In 1848 a commission of experts under Prince Adalbert of Prussia was appointed to build up a fleet. The Prince frankly based his work on the result of information obtained in England, from which country vessels were purchased as a beginning. The pioneer German-built warship, the *Danzig*, was engined in England. In 1870 Germany's naval strength was such that she was compelled to stand on the defensive at sea, as she did during the Great War, though by 1914 she had made such immense headway that she was the second naval Power in the world.

The modern German Navy was built up between 1898 and 1914. Bismarck saw no use for a mighty undertaking of the kind, but in 1897 Admiral von Hollmann gave place to Tirpitz, who held very different opinions. Things were ripe for development. Wilhelmshaven had been purchased from the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg, the war of 1864 had given Germany Kiel, and that of '66 Schleswig, Holstein, Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Nassau, and Frankfort. It was in 1900, when Anglophobia was rife on the Continent and Britain was engaged in fighting the Boers, that the first big Navy Bill was introduced. "Germany," it was declared, "must have a fleet of such strength that even for the mightiest naval Power a war with her would involve such risks as to jeopardize its own supremacy." Von der Goltz put the matter even more bluntly in an article in the *Deutsche Rundschau*. "The material foundations of our power,"

he wrote, "are broad enough to warrant the thought of successful opposition to British supremacy. Germany must meet this war, if it comes, and must lose no time in making her preparations. England's maritime supremacy, in peace as in war, must be scattered all over the world. Germany is far more favourably situated. Her sea-power is small, but in the event of war it could be kept in European waters."

Navy Bills succeeded each other in rapid succession —in 1906, 1908, 1912. Everything possible was done to whip up the interest of the public. Britain had been accused on many occasions of trying to put an iron ring round Germany by means of her understandings with Russia and France, but in 1909 Dr Delbrück, editor of the *Preussische Jahrbucher* and Professor of History at the University of Berlin, told the British public quite frankly in the pages of the *Contemporary Review* that the German Navy was to do the same thing for England. The *alpha* and *omega* of its existence was "to necessitate a cautious English policy, and to compel England continually to consider her relations with Germany."

It would be manifestly wrong to state that every German was enamoured of the Kaiser's dream of Sea-Power, though those who failed to see eye to eye with him were in the minority. In a letter written in December 1907, but not published until after his death, Herr von Holstein, for some years head of the Political Department in the German Foreign Office, thus unburdened himself to his correspondent: "In Germany the Navy fever is raging. This dangerous complaint is fed upon the unjustified fear of an English attack. The effect of the Navy fever is disastrous

in three respects: in domestic politics by the intrigues of the Navy League and the great dissatisfaction which this agitation causes in South Germany; in finance by expenditure which cannot be met; and in foreign policy by the distrust which these armaments engender. England sees in them a menace which compels her to remain chained to France. At the same time it is impossible, even with the utmost extension of taxation, to build a fleet equal to the united fleets of England and France. . . .

"No one can object to our land armaments, as they are justified by the needs of defence. But in our naval armaments several Powers see a menace. Also among Parliamentarians there are many who condemn the Navy fever, but no one will take upon himself the responsibility of voting against the ships, for it is a responsibility which, in case of a defeat at sea, would recoil upon him. To-day all who are opposed to the prevailing Navy fever are attacked on every side as unpatriotic, but in a few years the accuracy of my views will be demonstrated." Herr von Holstein's prophecy was fulfilled in November 1918.

The idea advanced by many Teutonic publicists that the Navy was not required for aggression but solely for colonial purposes was manifestly false. In 1903 the white population of the German protectorates in Africa and the South Seas amounted to a grand total of 7788 persons, of whom a large number were officials!

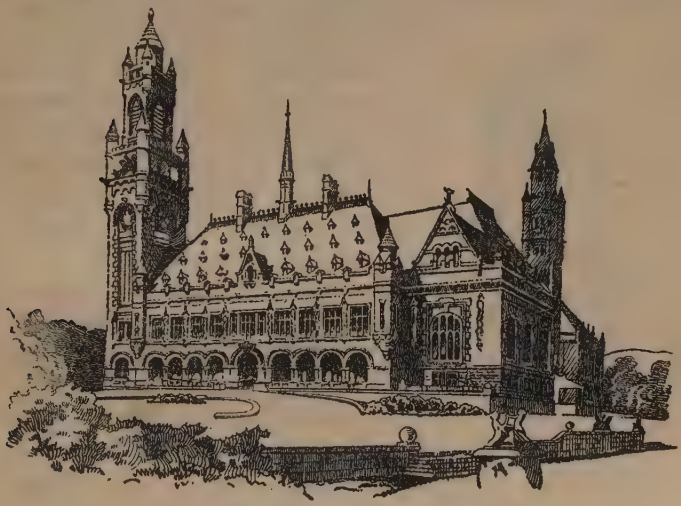
In 1908, when the German Fleet was making steady progress and a noisy minority of the British nation lifted up their voices in behalf of a reduced British Navy and Army as the only way to secure peace, the

Kaiser, in a private letter, took the opportunity to assure Lord Tweedmouth, First Lord of the Admiralty, that there was no cause for alarm so far as the Fatherland was concerned. The document, signed "William, I.R., Admiral of the Fleet," was made public in October 1914. It was largely a protest against that section of the Press and people which saw a menace in the augmentation of the Imperial Navy: "It seems to me that the main fault in the discussions going on in the papers is the permanent ventilating of the so-called 2–3 or more Power standard, and then only exemplifying on *one* Power, which is invariably Germany." It was "absolutely *nonsensical and untrue* that the German Naval Bill is to provide a Navy meant as a 'challenge to British Naval Supremacy.' The German Fleet is built *against* nobody at all. It is solely built *for* Germany's needs in relation with that country's rapidly growing trade." In conclusion, the Kaiser averred that his communication was "written by one who is an ardent admirer of your splendid Navy, who wishes it all success, and who hopes that its ensign may ever wave on the same side as the German Navy's, and by one who is proud to wear the British naval uniform of an Admiral of the Fleet, which was conferred on him by the late great Queen of blessed memory."

The reduction in the British Navy Estimates for 1908–9 was followed by a considerable increase in the next year.

In August 1898 Count Mouravieff, at the order of Nicholas II, Tsar of Russia, drew up a circular which was handed to foreign representatives at St Petersburg, calling urgent attention to the growing burden

of preparations for war. "The supreme duty imposed to-day on all States," he remarked, "is to put a limit to these incessant armaments, and to find means of averting the calamities which threaten the whole world. Hundreds of millions are spent in acquiring terrible engines of destruction, which are regarded



The Peace Palace at The Hague

to-day as the latest inventions of science, but are destined to-morrow to be rendered obsolete by some new discovery. National culture, economic progress, and the production of wealth are either paralysed or developed in the wrong direction. It consequently seems evident that if the situation be prolonged it will inevitably lead to that very disaster which it is desired to avoid, and the horrors of which make every humane mind shudder by anticipation." Lord

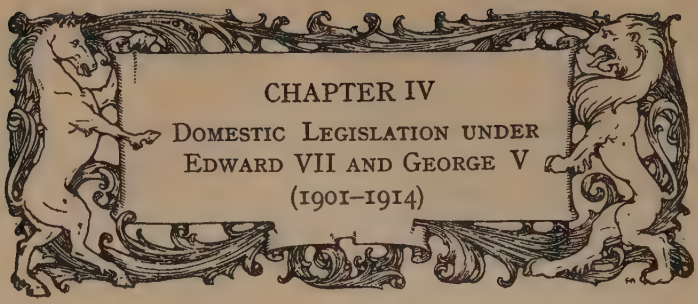
Salisbury replied that "the grounds of the Emperor's proposal are but too well justified."

To discuss the matter, the Tsar invited the Powers to gather at The Hague. The meeting took place in the following May, the countries represented being Britain, Germany, France, Russia, the United States, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Bulgaria, China, Japan, Denmark, Spain, Greece, Italy, Luxemburg, Montenegro, Holland, Portugal, Persia, Rumania, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, Serbia, Siam — twenty-six in all. This, the First Hague Conference, largely concerned itself with the codification of law already existing. The Second Conference, held in 1907, was attended by the delegates of forty-four Governments. The Third Conference was to meet in 1915. It did not take place. Civilization was then reeling under the blows of the bloodiest conflict of the centuries. The most practical result of the Tsar's plan was the formation of a permanent international tribunal for the settlement of disputes by arbitration, and up to 1914 seventeen cases had been heard. With bitter irony the greatest Test Case of all was settled by resort to the armaments it was intended to reduce. When Austria presented an ultimatum to Serbia in July 1914, the latter accepted nearly all the

Mr Andrew Carnegie

demands and frankly offered to submit the remaining points to the Hague Tribunal. Austria peremptorily refused.

In 1911 Mr Andrew Carnegie, a Scotsman who had gone to the United States as a poor lad and returned to his native land the possessor of a vast fortune, gave £2,000,000 for a fund to help the cause of hastening the abolition of war. Part of the sum was used to build a Palace of Peace at The Hague, which was duly opened in August 1913. Germany presented the iron gates as a token of goodwill. Another prominent personality who sought to promote peace was Alfred Nobel (1833–1896), a Swede, who amassed a large sum of money by making explosives. Among other bequests he left a fund to provide £8000 in each year to the man or woman who, in the opinion of a committee, had done most to further the object he had so much at heart.



CHAPTER IV

Domestic Legislation under Edward VII and George V (1901–1914)

WHEN Edward VII came to the throne Lord Salisbury's Ministry was in power as a result of what was known as the Khaki Election, the issue having centred around the South African War, then in progress. The nation had held to the dictum that it is "unwise to change horses in the middle of a stream," despite the amazing incompetency and muddle-through methods that the conduct of the campaign had disclosed. A plan to reorganize the Army met with anything but a warm reception. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the leader of the Liberal Party, declined to share in the responsibility for the war, and lost no opportunity for attacking both the policy that had led up to it and the inefficiency with which it was being conducted. For a fleeting moment the figure of Lord Rosebery appeared on the political stage, and it was hoped by many that the unofficial orator of the Empire and the last Liberal Premier was about to cease to "plough a lonely furrow." In a notable speech made at Chesterfield in December 1901 he appealed for "a clean slate" and efficiency, outlined an Imperialistic policy which he held to be not inconsistent with Liberal

principles, sought to close up the gaping ranks of the Opposition by suggesting that their programme would be more likely of attainment if it contained fewer items, and demanded a method that would end the seemingly interminable war. Had he boldly offered himself as the working head of a party pledged to the furtherance of these views there is little doubt that he would have succeeded in making the Liberal Imperialists a force to be reckoned with, but he soon set both hopes and fears at rest by returning to his solitary vigil.

What the oratory of the noble peer failed to secure in the matter of closing up the Liberal ranks the Government in power succeeded in achieving when it introduced an Education Bill of a highly controversial character. Broadly, it was proposed that voluntary schools should be financed by the nation while retaining their denominational character. This raised a terrible storm, because Nonconformists felt that if the Act were passed they would be paying for the education of children in religious ideas and ideals which they held to be erroneous. After a great deal of opposition in the House and in the country the Bill finally passed in the autumn session of 1902. The public elementary schools were maintained on undenominational lines, as hitherto, and the voluntary schools as denominational institutions at the expense of the ratepayers.

In July 1902 Lord Salisbury retired from the Government; Mr A. J. Balfour became Prime Minister and Leader of the House, and the Duke of Devonshire leader of the Government in the House of Lords.

Leaving the vexed question of Tariff Reform for a later chapter, reference must be made to another

party issue, namely, the introduction of Chinese labour in the mines of South Africa, a practice loudly denounced by the Liberal Party when out of office, and which they did not find it possible to abolish for a considerable time after they returned to power in 1906, notwithstanding that the question certainly influenced the election.

In the Licensing Bill of 1904 it was proposed that licensed victuallers should create a fund for the payment of compensation to their fellow-traders should their licenses not be renewed on the ground that their houses were unnecessary, and provided that the licence was not withdrawn on account of law-breaking. As the law recognized no property in a licence, because it was subject to annual renewal, a certain section of the public held that the trade had no moral right to compensation, and also objected that the Bill would have the effect of establishing freehold in licences. Others said that the business of obtaining a permit was virtually in the same category as purchasing a season-ticket. Provided the houses had been properly conducted the licences should be granted as a matter of course. The Bill was passed, but it did much to shake what stability the Government still possessed, and in December 1905 Mr Balfour resigned.

The burden of forming a new Administration fell on Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, a conscientious politician, outwardly robust, but scarcely fitted for the immense strain that falls to the lot of a Prime Minister, for he was admittedly a slow worker. In addition, he had to live down the idea held by many of his antagonists that he was the friend of every

country but his own. The result of the General Election of January 1906, which was mainly fought on the issue Free Trade *v.* Tariff Reform, was a sweeping victory for the Liberals. The claims of Labour were recognized and its interest in the new Parliament secured by the withdrawal of a Government Bill for the protection of trade unions, and the substitution of a measure proposed by the members of the party most concerned. By the Act of 1875 trade unions could not be sued as corporate bodies, but in 1903 what was known as the Taff Vale judgment had decided otherwise. Both the Commons and the Lords upheld the former legislation on the subject.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman

A Bill which sought to make it illegal for one man to have more than one vote was rejected by the Upper House. Its critics scented a party move, because most of the plural voters were Unionists, and retorted by suggesting that the principle of "one vote one value" ought to be applied, a measure that would reduce the number of Irish members, on whose favour the Liberals largely depended.

It is said that compromise is the peculiar genius of the Briton, and when Mr Augustine Birrell introduced the Education Bill of the new Government in April 1906 he appealed to the principle of give-and-take. The Act of 1902, which placed the denomi-

national voluntary schools on the rates, was exceedingly unpopular with a vast majority of Nonconformists, some of whom showed their aversion to it by refusing to pay rates and becoming conscientious objectors. It was proposed that the institutions in question should no longer be supported by the public purse. If they obtained insufficient support by voluntary contributions the local authority could take them over and assume control, when the teaching would be entirely undenominational. Sectarian religious teaching was to be given only in special circumstances, and teachers were to be appointed irrespective of their belief. The voluntary school buildings were not to be taken over, although the cost of maintenance would be borne by the rates, and after school hours the owners could use them for other purposes. The House of Lords made so many amendments that the Government dropped the Bill.

Mr H. H. Asquith's Budget of 1907 was notable in introducing a distinction between earned incomes and those regarded as not so derived, namely from investments and real estate. The duties payable on the death of a wealthy person were also augmented.

The ever-increasing armies of Continental Powers impelled Great Britain to see that her own military house was in order, particularly as the South African War had revealed many and serious deficiencies. The veteran Lord Roberts conducted a strenuous campaign for National Service, but his plea for compulsory training lacked official backing and attracted little public support, though the country saw its error in the dark days of 1914. The Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill was successfully piloted by Mr Haldane

(later Lord Haldane), and duly passed in 1907, although shorn of some of its most important provisions. The Regular Army was to consist of four cavalry brigades and six infantry divisions, totalling 160,000 officers and men, in addition to reservists. By reorganizing the militia, yeomanry, and volunteers, a Territorial Army, assessed at 300,000, was to be created, controlled by County Associations. Critics pointed out that the Regular Army had been reduced by abolishing ten infantry battalions, and the reduction of the regular garrison artillery by 4000 men.

When Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was forming his Ministry he sent for Mr Haldane and suggested one or two offices that he might fill. The positions did not find favour with the educationist. "There is another office I should like," he said. "I do not know much about it, but it is full of fascinating problems." "What is it?" asked Sir Henry. "The War Office; is it filled?" queried Haldane. "Filled!" was the astonished reply. "No one will touch it with a pole!"

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was compelled on account of ill-health to resign early in 1908, Mr Asquith becoming Premier and Mr Lloyd George Chancellor of the Exchequer. The latter, however, did not introduce the Budget of the new Executive, that unpopular and difficult task being performed by Mr Asquith. Mr Joseph Chamberlain's pet scheme of Old Age Pensions was introduced and passed. By the provisions of the Bill every one, with certain exceptions, on arriving at the age of seventy became entitled to 5s. a week, provided that his or her income from other sources did not exceed 10s. a week, and that

the applicants had been British subjects for twenty years.

A second Education Bill was introduced and withdrawn, and then the Government tackled the equally difficult problem of the drink traffic. It was proposed to reduce compulsorily the number of licences by one-third within fourteen years, compensation being paid by the trade. After that period it was to be distinctly understood that licensees might not claim renewals as an absolute right. The Upper House rejected the Bill on the second reading.

Mr Asquith

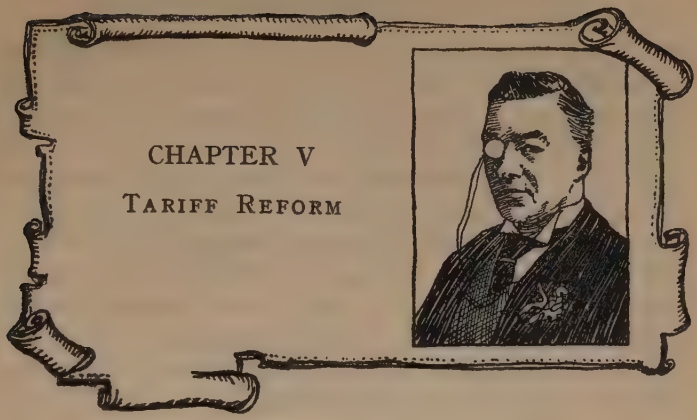
In 1909 foreign naval rivalry, particularly on the part of Germany, gave grave concern to those responsible for the efficient maintenance of Britain's first line of defence. The Board of Admiralty, including Mr Reginald M'Kenna, First Lord, and Lord Fisher, First Sea Lord, were so insistent on the urgency of the matter that they actually resigned, and remained out of office until they were assured that their demands would be met. What was then considered to be an extensive shipbuilding programme of four Dreadnought battleships, with powers to double that number if deemed necessary, was brought forward, and it was Mr Lloyd George's task in his first Budget to find the money. He proposed to do it by means of a super-tax on incomes over £5000 per annum, an increase on the

death duties, an increase in the cost of licences to sell alcoholic liquors, and additional duties on tobacco and spirits. A new tax was to be put on land, other than that devoted to agriculture, which had risen in value by fortuitous circumstances, and which value was therefore deemed unearned increment. The House of Lords had not the right to amend a Finance Bill, but it could reject it, although it had not done so for centuries. That prerogative it now decided to exercise. Faced by this crisis, and suffering under the smart of other rejected measures, the Government determined to appeal to the electorate rather than alter the Budget one jot or tittle.

The Liberals triumphed again at the polls in January 1910, and promptly set to work to curb the power of the Peers. Mr Asquith suggested that the Lords should have no right to negative financial measures. The veto was to be limited to two years for other measures which had been twice passed by the House of Commons ; being then passed in a third session, they would automatically become law after receiving the royal assent. Parliament was to sit for five instead of seven years, as hitherto. The constitutional battle was at its height when the nation was staggered by the news that Edward VII was dead. A General Election was fought, largely on the issue of Commons *v.* Lords, and the Government was again returned to power. The Parliament Bill of 1911, embodying the Premier's proposals of 1910, was not rejected by the Lords, although some stalwarts fought for their former rights to the last ditch.

National insurance, a measure already in operation in Germany, was introduced by Mr Lloyd George

and passed in the same year, and the Plural Voting Bill was revived. A wordy strife was taking place on the questions of Ireland and Welsh Disestablishment when the menace of war put political turmoil and home affairs in the background, and Britain began furiously to think of the Inevitable.



CHAPTER V

Tariff Reform

IT was during his eight years' occupation of the Colonial Office, where no statesman did finer work or so fully enjoyed the sympathy of the 'Lion's whelps,' that Mr Joseph Chamberlain came to the conclusion that preferential tariffs ought to be established between the Mother Country and the Colonies.

Toward the end of 1901 the Prince of Wales had returned from his tour of the Dominions and boldly proclaimed the idea entertained generally oversea that England "must wake up if she intended to maintain her position of pre-eminence in colonial trade against foreign competition." Chamberlain was strongly of opinion that his plan, which eventually developed into a general scheme of Protection, would consolidate the interests of the commonweal, encourage home manufactures, and form an important binding-link in the Imperial chain. He preached his gospel of Imperial Federation, as he did that of Imperial Defence, at the Conference of Colonial Premiers in

1897 and again in 1902. Canada, at the suggestion of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, had in the former year granted a preference to certain goods imported from the United Kingdom. Germany refused to admit the validity of this arrangement, and in 1901 excepted the Dominion from the 'most favoured nation' treatment accorded to the British Empire. This forced a bitter trade war, Germany retaliating by making Canadian goods subject to the General Tariff, thereby imposing upon them the maximum rates of duty. It was not until 1910 that a commercial treaty between the two countries was signed, when the surtax of 33⅓ per cent. on German goods exported to the Dominion was removed, and Canadian goods were admitted into Germany under the 'most favoured nation clause' as formerly.

Mr Chamberlain's theory regarding the fiscal system known as Free Trade is shown in the following extract from a speech he delivered to his Birmingham constituents in May 1902, just previous to the fourth Colonial Conference:

"Old ideas of trade and free competition have changed," he avowed. "We are face to face with great combinations, with enormous trusts, having behind them gigantic wealth. Even the industries and commerce which we thought to be particularly our own, even these are in danger. It is quite impossible that those new methods of competition can be met by adherence to old and antiquated methods, which were perfectly right at the time at which they were developed. At the present moment the Empire is being attacked on all sides, and in our isolation we must look to ourselves. We must draw closer our

internal relations, the ties of sympathy—yes, and the ties of interest. If by adherence to economic pedantry, to old shibboleths, we are to lose opportunities of closer union which are offered us by our Colonies, if we are to put aside occasions now within our grasp, if we do not take every chance in our power to keep British trade in British hands, I am certain that we shall deserve the disasters which will infallibly come upon us."

"If we chose," Mr Chamberlain told the Colonial Premiers, "the Empire might be self-sustaining. It is so wide, its products are so various, its climates so different, that there is absolutely nothing which is necessary to our existence, hardly anything which is desirable as a luxury, which cannot be produced within the borders of the Empire itself." He also told his listeners that "Free Trade within the Empire would enormously increase our inter-Imperial trade; it would hasten the development of our Colonies; it would fill up the spare places in our lands with an active, intelligent, and industrial British population; it would make the Mother Country entirely independent of foreign food and raw material. But when I speak of Free Trade I do not mean the total abolition of customs duties as between different parts of the Empire. New Zealand proposes a preferential tariff in favour of British goods which are now taxable in the respective Colonies and in the United Kingdom. While we may most readily and most gratefully accept from you any preference which you may be willing to accord to us, we cannot pay for it unless you go much further and enable us to enter your home market on terms of greater equality."

Mr Chamberlain frankly regarded the result of the Canadian preference as disappointing to England. The point of view of the Canadian representatives was "that if they could be assured that the Imperial Government would accept the principle of preferential trade generally, and particularly grant to the food products of Canada in the United Kingdom exemption from duties now levied, or hereinafter imposed, they, the Canadian Ministers, would be prepared to go further into the subject, and endeavour to give to the British manufacturer some increased advantage over his foreign competitors in the markets of Canada." The "duties now levied" consisted of a war-tax of one shilling a quarter on imported corn. This imposition Mr Chamberlain had suggested should be removed on Colonial produce. During his absence in South Africa, however, Mr C. T. R. Ritchie, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, insisted on its retention, although the Cabinet had agreed previous to the departure of the Colonial Secretary that the concession should be made. In 1898 Canada had increased her preference to Great Britain from 12½ per cent. of the duty to 25 per cent., and two years later to 33⅓ per cent. New Zealand, Australia, and the South African Customs Union reciprocated in 1903, 1905, and 1906 respectively, although preference had been established between Canada and New Zealand, and New Zealand and South Australia, in 1895.

Mr Chamberlain's passionate desire to bind the Colonies closer to the Mother Country, of meeting their offer of preferential treatment in the way he deemed it should be met, led him to resign office in

order to devote himself without let or hindrance to his propaganda.

"It is because I sympathize with their object," he said; "it is because I appreciate the wisdom, aye, the generosity of their offer; it is because I see that things are moving, and that an opportunity now in your hands once lost will never recur; it is because I believe that this policy will consolidate the Empire—it is for all these things, and, believe me, for no personal ambition, that I have given up that office which I was so proud to hold; and that now, when I might, I think, fairly claim a period of rest, I have taken up new burdens, and come before you as a missionary of Empire, to urge upon you again, as I did in old times, when I protested against the disruption of the United Kingdom, once again to warn you, to urge you, to implore you to do nothing that will tend toward the disintegration of the Empire, not to refuse to sacrifice a futile superstition, an inept prejudice, and thereby to lose the results of centuries of noble effort and patriotic endeavour."

There were inconsistencies in his ideas, but his sincerity was beyond question. He argued that if a moderate protective tariff were placed on foreign manufactured goods and imported corn, and there were mutual preference between the Colonies and England, the result would be all to the good of the Empire. There would be no tax on raw materials. As the cost of articles from Germany, the United States, and so on would obviously be more in the United Kingdom, he anticipated an immediate revival of home industries, because of the elimination of unfair competition, and with that revival more work

and increased wages. The opposing Free Trade interests at once took up the cry that food would be dearer, and in the eyes of the vast majority of the inhabitants of the British Isles that was quite sufficient to damn the proposal. The advantage to the Colonies and to the home milling industry from the higher duty on foreign wheat, which would be ground here, was regarded as of little practical value. "For my own part," Mr Chamberlain told the Duke of Devonshire, "I care only for the great question of Imperial unity. Everything else is secondary or consequential." The condemnation of Protection in England obviously condemned the whole tariff system of Europe, and also of the United States.

"If Protection inevitably brought with it destitution and misery and starvation," Mr Chamberlain asked, "and if Free Trade inevitably brought with it prosperity and progress, how do our opponents account for the fact that every foreign country without exception that has adopted Protection has in recent years at any rate progressed much more rapidly, in much greater proportion than we, the Free Trade country?" Mr Chamberlain pointed out that England was the dumping ground for low-priced goods from Protected countries which produced more than they could consume, and that British manufacturers had a hard fight to compete in those countries by reason of their tariffs.

"Dumping," he asserted, "is the placing of the surplus of any manufacture in any country which is able to take it. Dumping takes place when the country which adopts it has a production which is larger than its own demand. Not being able to

dispose of its surplus at home, it dumps it somewhere else. The United Kingdom is the only country where this can be carried on successfully, because we are the only country that keeps open ports. Every other great country immediately puts on a tariff to keep out these dumped articles." He pointed out that in thirty years foreign manufactured imports into the United Kingdom had gone up from £63,000,000 to £149,000,000.

On December 4, 1905, Mr Balfour resigned office, and the ensuing General Election left the Unionists in a minority, the party having lost over two hundred seats. A poster depicting a big Free Trade loaf and a much smaller Protectionist loaf, coupled with many oratorical references to German rye bread and Chinese labour in South Africa, had doubtless much to do with this result. The late Prime Minister's confession that he had no settled convictions on the subject uppermost in the people's thoughts, as well as dissensions in the party as to the relative merits of Tariff Reform and Free Trade, cannot but have contributed to the collapse. Mr Balfour had leanings toward a policy of Retaliation, which is doing unto others what they do unto you until a more reasonable frame of mind is evidenced by a mutual arrangement known as Reciprocity. Speaking at Sheffield on October 9, 1903, he tacitly admitted that "a tax on food is not, with public opinion in the state it is, within the limits of practical politics."

A number of distinguished economists were frankly against the proposal. They held that Protection brought in its train the loss of purity in politics and the growth of "sinister interests," that it

might conceivably engender irritating controversies between the different members of the Empire owing to an "opposition of interests" instead of promoting amity. They categorically denied that an increase of imports involved the diminished employment of workmen in the importing country. They regarded a tax on food as likely to result in a lowering of the real remuneration of labour, and it seemed to the experts "impossible to devise any tariff regulations which shall at once expand the wheat-growing areas in the Colonies, encourage agriculture in the United Kingdom, and at the same time not injure the British consumer." Lord Rosebery regarded better education as the weapon with which to fight hostile tariffs; Mr Asquith held that it was undesirable to have a self-contained Empire "between which and the rest of the world there are none of those commercial relations which are so fruitful of peace and amity and goodwill"; Mr John Morley said that it was a matter of life and death to the United Kingdom to persuade foreign nations to rally to the Free Trade flag, because it was the flag, after all, of civilized intercourse between nations. Sir Henry Fowler openly defended Germany's dumping steel bars, because then we were better able to compete with her in the manufactured article; and in reply to Mr Chamberlain's remark that "If you wish to keep the Empire together you must have preferential tariffs" Mr Asquith retorted, "I believe it to be a calumny on the Colonies and a slur on the Empire."

Mr Chamberlain continued his campaign until he was stricken with paralysis, which precluded him from taking a further active interest in the cause he had so

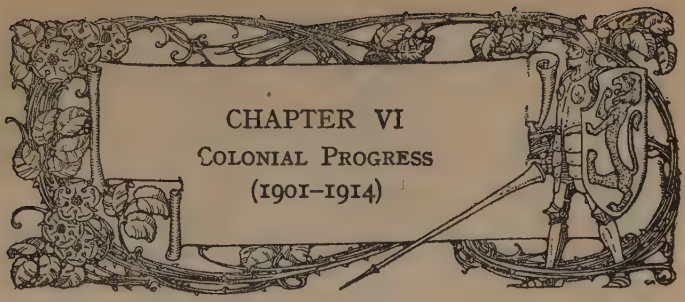
much at heart. When he was compelled to leave the arena his colleagues endeavoured for a time to carry on the crusade, but there was none able to sustain the interest of the public. He was the heart and soul of the movement, and very soon it waned, to wax again as a definite policy of the Coalition Government of 1919.

Mr Joseph Chamberlain's career is one deserving of study as showing how a man of iron determination may become a power in the land despite the lack of a university education and the advantage of high birth. Born at Camberwell, London, in the year preceding Queen Victoria's accession, he first played a successful *rôle* in the commercial world as a manufacturer of screws. In course of time he became Mayor of Birmingham, an ardent Republican, a convinced municipal reformer, an earnest supporter of the Radicals, and eventually a convinced Imperialist. He was probably at once the most cordially hated and most admired politician of his time. The epithets hurled at him by those who failed to appreciate his qualities are indicative of his forcefulness. "The Artful Dodger," "the Imperial Bagman," and "Judas" are choice specimens. On the other side he was known to his fellows as "the Man who Does" and "Joey." Defeated at Sheffield in the General Election of 1874, he became a representative of Birmingham in 1876, and retained his seat for thirty-eight years, every one of which was lived to the full until ill-health put an end to his amazing activities. He was fighting all his life, and as a Parliamentary debater had no peer. A lover of vigorous language, swift at repartee, ever ready to give a Roland for an

Oliver, he was a gladiator whom few cared to tackle in open combat. He died on July 2, 1914.

Mr Austen Chamberlain

In his 1919 Budget Mr Austen Chamberlain, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, definitely introduced the principle of Imperial Preference by reducing the existing import duties on certain Colonial products by one-sixth, and on others by one-third. Tea, coffee, cocoa, sugar, dried fruits, tobacco, and motor spirit came in the former class, and cinema films, clocks, watches, motor-cars and cycles, and musical instruments in the latter. With filial piety he remarked, "I am grateful that it has fallen to my lot to make the first proposal in this House for the statutory embodiment in our financial system of that policy of Imperial Preference with which my father's name and fame will ever be linked."



CHAPTER VI

Colonial Progress (1901–1914)

AT the time of the accession of Edward VII the British Empire covered a quarter of the globe. India, an Empire within an Empire, Dominions with complete local self-government, Crown Colonies, Protectorates, spheres of influence, leased areas, and territories under Chartered Companies were its constituent parts. A motley crowd of peoples, speaking almost every known language and existing in every clime, composed its citizens.

Colonies and commerce are synonymous terms in the history of British empire-making. At first the dependencies were bound to the Mother Country as tightly as was possible in the days when sailing ships drifted round the globe and the telegraph was non-existent. Colonies were chiefly useful for supplying materials not available at home, and as customers for goods. It must be confessed that the arrangement was rather one-sided and seldom mutual. Let us be candid and say selfish. Imports and exports were virtually monopolized. This was not merely British theory, but universal practice.

The loss of the American colonies gradually led to the loosening of the reins. Turgot, the great

French statesman, said that colonies were like fruit which, when ripe, naturally drops from the parent stem. Disraeli, previous to becoming an out-and-out Imperialist, pessimistically declared that "Those wretched colonies will all be independent in a few years, and they are a millstone round our necks." To-day Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa have practically complete control of their domestic affairs; their foreign relations are conducted from Whitehall. Every four years there is an Imperial Conference in London touching on vital matters concerning the Old Land and the New Lands.

The policy of governing colonies by leaving the government largely in their own hands was entirely vindicated during the World War. Australia raised over 417,000 men, Canada 552,000 men, New Zealand over 100,000 men, South Africa 150,000 men—every mile of territory coloured red on the map contributed of her best. The testimony of Samuel Gompers, that robust American labour leader, may be taken as impartial: "The very fact that the Boers of South Africa, after Great Britain had conquered them and given them the opportunity for self-government and self-development, that these people, conquered less than two decades before, should volunteer to enter the service of the Mother Country in the common cause, is the greatest tribute ever paid to a nation."

India comes under a different category, though possibly the time is fast approaching when her 300,000,000 people will be given a measure of home rule. On January 1, 1903, the first King-Emperor

Delhi Durbar : The Proclamation, January 1, 1903
S. Begg

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was proclaimed in Delhi at the greatest of Durbars, his Majesty being represented by the Duke of Connaught. The dignified and impressive greeting sent by the monarch to his Eastern subjects, comprising nearly one-fifth of the human race, was read by Lord Curzon, the Viceroy. Its most significant passage is as follows:

"To all my feudatories and subjects throughout India I renew the assurance of my regard for their liberties, of respect for their dignities and rights, of interest in their advancement, and of devotion to their welfare, which are the supreme aim and object of my rule, and which, under the blessing of Almighty God, will lead to the increasing prosperity of my Indian Empire and the greater happiness of its peoples."

Edward VII, who had visited India in 1875, always took keen interest in its affairs, and would gladly have renewed his acquaintance with the land and its peoples after coming to the throne, had this been found possible. "The natural advantages of India," he once said, "would have ensured a large amount of commerce under any strong government, but in its various and industrious population I gladly recognize the traces of a rule which gives shelter to all who obey the laws; which recognizes no invidious distinctions of race; which affords to all perfect liberty in matters of religious opinion and belief, and freedom in the pursuit of trade and of all lawful callings. I note with satisfaction that under British rule men of varied creeds and nations live in harmony among themselves, and develop to the utmost those energies which they inherit from widely separate

families of mankind, while all join in loyal attachment to the British Crown, and take their part in the management of their own local affairs."

During Lord Curzon's somewhat autocratic administration he did much excellent work to assist education and irrigation, and to revive native industries. He also organized a new frontier province of the Trans-Indus territories, separating them from the Punjab (1901), piloted India through severe famines and plagues, and sent an expedition to Thibet (1904), the object of which was "to remove the embargo that at present rests upon all trade between Thibet and India, and to establish those amicable relations and means of communication that ought to subsist between adjacent and friendly Powers." The expedition, in every way a remarkable military feat, was entirely successful, the Dalai Lama fleeing at its approach and leaving a regent to negotiate. By the terms of the treaty signed in the palace monastery at Lhasa, Great Britain secured control of the country's foreign policy.

Lord Curzon

At the time much criticism was levelled at the Viceroy for the partition of the unwieldy province of Bengal by making a separate Lieutenant-Governorship of Eastern Bengal and Assam (1905), a decision afterward reversed. Another storm was also brewing

which was not disposed of quite so satisfactorily. Lord Kitchener, Commander-in-Chief in India, made extensive alterations in the disposition and organization of the Army, introducing what he called "method and intelligible order" in the grouping of the forces. More adequate pay, a higher scale of pensions, the erection of munition factories, and the re-arming of the infantry and of the artillery were some of the much-desired reforms that he introduced. The limitation of his own power, however, was Kitchener's most difficult problem. The Military Member of Council was the adviser of the Government on military matters; consequently the Commander-in-Chief was virtually his subordinate. Kitchener contended that the former office, a survival of the days when Bengal, Bombay, and Madras each had its own army, was manifestly wrong. In his opinion he ought to advise the executive on purely military questions. He explicitly stated that he had no desire to set up a military autocracy, the civil Government remaining supreme.

"One of the chief faults of the Indian system," he stated in one of his Minutes on this important matter, "is the enormous delay and endless discussion which it involves. It is impossible to formulate or carry out any consistent military policy. No needed reform can be initiated, no useful measure can be initiated, no useful measure can be adopted, without being subject to vexatious and, for the most part, unnecessary criticism—not merely as regards the financial effect of the proposal, but as to its desirability or necessity from the purely military point of view. The fault lies simply in the system,

which has created two offices which have been trained to unfortunate jealousy and antagonism, and which, therefore, duplicate work, and in the duplication destroy progress and defeat the true ends of military efficiency. The system is one of dual control and divided responsibility. It is a system of 'want of trust,' such as that which has recently been condemned and abolished in the Army at home."

After a great deal of discussion a compromise was arranged. The Military Member of Council was to give place to a Member for Military Supply, and a new Army Department under the Commander-in-Chief was to take over the work of the old Military Department, with the exception of supply, which would constitute a second department. While the Viceroy had the right to consult the Member for Military Supply on military matters, the new member was not entitled to insist upon being consulted. The Commander-in-Chief was made "directly responsible to the Governor-General in Council for command, staff, and regimental appointments, promotion, discipline, training, organization, distribution of the army, intelligence, mobilization, schemes of offence and defence, peace manœuvres, war preparations (excluding supply of *matériel*), and the conduct of war."

Lord Curzon nominated General Barrow, formerly of the Military Department, as the new Military Supply Member. Knowing that the appointment would not be endorsed by Lord Kitchener, the Secretary of State for India declined to accept it, and Lord Curzon resigned. The Supply Department was subsequently abolished at the suggestion of Lord Morley (1909), the

ex-Viceroy remarking in the House of Lords that the system was one of "dangerous centralization."

Just previous to Lord Curzon's departure he received the Prince and Princess of Wales, then on their tour of the Empire. To the astonishment of many, it was found that Mr John Morley (later Lord Morley), Secretary of State for India, who was commonly reputed to entertain somewhat Utopian notions, worked very harmoniously with Lord Minto, the new Viceroy, despite the necessity for stringent measures owing to the growth of unrest. On the other hand, increased native representation was granted, and a native of India was placed on the Governor-General's Executive Council.

Following a visit to India of Mr E. S. Montagu, then Secretary of State, the important Montagu-Chelmsford Report was issued in July 1918, and in the following winter two Committees investigated various matters connected with constitutional and other reforms. Among other suggestions they proposed that the Provincial Legislative Councils should be chosen by an electorate of 5,179,000 persons instead of only 33,007. Woman suffrage was not deemed practicable. The illiteracy of India is, of course, the main stumbling-block in the way of many liberal measures that might otherwise be introduced.

The Australian Commonwealth was born a few days before the death of Queen Victoria, but the opening of the first Parliament of the six federated States was postponed until May 7, 1901, in order that the ceremony might be performed by the Duke of Cornwall (later George V). The enfranchisement of women, the rise of the Labour Party, the passing of an

Old Age Pensions Act, a Naval Loan Bill for the provision of four cruisers, half a dozen gunboats, and three submarines, the offer of a Dreadnought to the British Government, a progressive land tax, the provision of a referendum to the electorate in cases of dispute between the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly, the introduction of laws to protect the working man, to give every individual a chance, and the fixing of Canberra as the seat of the Federal Government, are some of the notable events since 1901.

New Zealand became a Dominion in 1907, and two years later, when the question of British naval supremacy seemed to be in doubt, Sir Joseph Ward, the Premier, cabled to the Imperial Government: "New Zealand offers one battleship, and two, if necessary, as an addition to the guardian fleet of the Homeland."

It was also in 1909 that Canada, "the half-way house of the Empire," gave considerable attention to what both political parties in the Dominion considered of paramount importance in the light of Germany's pugnacious disposition. The following resolution was passed unanimously:

"This House fully recognizes the duty of the people of Canada, as they increase in numbers and wealth, to assume in larger measure the responsibilities in national defence. The House is of opinion that under the present constitutional relations between the Mother Country and the self-governing Dominions, the payment of regular and periodical contributions to the Imperial Treasury for naval and military purposes would not, so far as Canada is concerned,

be the most satisfactory solution of the question of defence.

"The House will cordially approve of any necessary expenditure designed to promote the speedy organization of a Canadian Naval Service in co-operation with and in close relation to the Imperial Navy, along the lines suggested by the Admiralty at the last Imperial Conference, and in full sympathy with the view that the naval supremacy of Britain is essential to the security and safety of the Empire and the peace of the world.

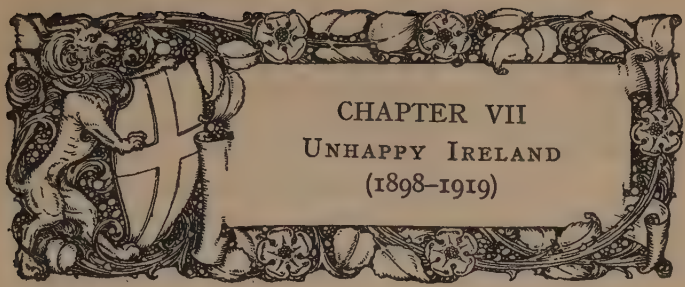
"The House expresses its firm conviction that whenever the need arises the Canadian people will be found ready and willing to make any sacrifice that is required to give to the Imperial authorities the most loyal and hearty co-operation in every movement for the maintenance of the integrity and the honour of the Empire."

A Naval Service Bill providing for eleven ships was introduced by the Laurier Government in the following year, and provoked considerable discussion. As a beginning, two cruisers were bought to serve as training-ships, but the suggestion of the British Admiralty that a Dreadnought should be built for the Pacific coast was not acted upon.

In 1913 Mr Robert L. Borden, then Premier, submitted proposals to the Canadian Parliament for the construction of three super-Dreadnoughts and a number of smaller ships, the former to be built in British shipyards and the latter in Canada, and for representation by a Canadian Minister on the Imperial Committee of Defence. The battleships were to form an essential portion of the Imperial

Navy, though subject to recall should the Dominion determine on a fleet of her own. Sir Wilfrid Laurier put forward an amendment providing for two Dreadnoughts and minor vessels as fleet units for the Atlantic and the Pacific, and stipulating that they should be built in Dominion yards and remain under the entire control of the Canadian Executive. The Senate did not accept the proposal, but held it over "until it should be passed on by the Canadian electorate in a general election." The national spirit was willing, but the body politic was weak.

In 1905 Alberta and Saskatchewan, in the Great North-West, became provinces, each with a Lieutenant-Governor, Prime Minister, Cabinet, and the machinery necessary for local government, and representatives in the Dominion Senate and House of Commons. The troublesome Alaska boundary dispute between Canada and the United States, a legacy of the British treaty of 1825, was submitted to a commission of arbitrators, who mainly favoured the American claim. Canada was excluded from the waters of the inlets as far as Portland Channel, the islands of Wales and Pearse being awarded to Canada, and Kannaghunut and Sitklan to the United States. The Dominion was thereby deprived of a port to the great gold-mining district of the Klondike, and the decision was bitterly resented.



CHAPTER VII

Unhappy Ireland (1898–1919)

FOR some years after the death of Gladstone in 1898, conciliation in Irish matters was the order of the day at Westminster. So far as Parliament itself was concerned, Home Rule was moribund, though its adherents were active enough in the Emerald Isle. There were, however, two influential forces at work in Ireland that made for a peaceful settlement, namely, the Irish Agricultural Organization Society, founded in 1889 by Sir Horace Plunkett, and the Gaelic League, which owed its inception in 1893 to Dr Douglas Hyde. The programme of the former was to induce the farmers to co-operate in agricultural work, seeking "the rehabilitation of Ireland from within." It was a practical industrial panacea, while the Gaelic League was an intellectual antidote, its main object being to resurrect the native Erse language in both the spoken and printed word. Both institutions obtained a large measure of success, more particularly the former, though neither was essentially political.

In 1903 a new Irish Land Act was added to the Statute Book, enabling tenants to become proprietors by the loan of money at 3¼ per cent., and repayable

in annual instalments extending over a period of sixty-eight and a half years. At the same time adequate terms were offered to the landlords, who were to be paid in cash and also to receive a bonus at the rate of 12 per cent. of the purchase-price. The average price paid worked out to almost twenty-three years' purchase. The money required was to be found by the British Government by the issue of stock. The Act was amended in 1909 owing largely to financial difficulties, the purchase price being paid in stock, the cash bonus varying according to the sum paid for the land, and the rate of interest payable by tenants being raised to 3½ per cent. Further Bills dealing with the agrarian problem were introduced in 1913 and 1914 and withdrawn. Protection against eviction, and compensation for disturbance for dwellers in urban districts, were afforded by the Town Tenants Act of 1906. The Evicted Tenants Bill for the compulsory purchase of land for the settlement of evicted tenants was passed in 1907. Certain modifications suggested by the Upper House were made in both these measures. An attempt by means of an Irish Councils Bill to give a measure of local self-government to the island was frustrated by the Nationalists, who would have none of it, and it was relegated to the limbo of rejected suggestions. The

John Redmond

year 1908 was notable in Irish legislation for the institution of old age pensions and a comprehensive system of university education.

Bearing in mind these measures for the amelioration of Erin, it cannot be said that England was indifferent to the well-being of her fractious neighbour. Unfortunately, as Mr John Redmond, the head of the Nationalist Party, stated in 1904, Home Rule "is the only thing which can ever lead to a real revival of Irish industries."

In September 1914 Home Rule, which was to be the panacea for all evil in Ireland to Nationalists and the beginning of the deluge to Ulstermen, was actually on the Statute Book, with the proviso that it would not be put into force until the end of the war and after an amicable settlement of the claims of the Protestant North. Nearly two years later an attempt was made to adjust the differences, but no substantial agreement was arrived at. The main terms of the Home Rule Act are that Ireland is to have a Parliament and a Cabinet, but in several essential points, such as the control of the Services and foreign affairs, Westminster will rule as hitherto, with the assistance of forty-two Irish members instead of the former 103.

Sinn Fein, which means 'Ourselves alone,' is an old movement under a new name. Its ultimate goal is an Irish Republic, for which the United Irishmen of the eighteenth century and the Fenians of its successor worked with boisterous and treacherous enthusiasm. It has no belief in what is regarded as the slow and uncertain method of Parliamentary action as practised by the Nationalist Party at Westminster. It is frankly revolutionary, and partial to violent methods when

opportunity offers, as was the case in 1916. Its representatives will fight a Parliamentary election, and having won it, promptly refuse to take their seat in the House. "The spirit of what to-day is called Sinn Feinism," to quote Mr Augustine Birrell, "is mainly composed of the old hatred and distrust of the British connexion, always noticeable in all classes and in all places, varying in degree and finding different ways of expression, but always there as the background of Irish politics and character."

Apparently the Gaelic League afforded the Sinn Feiners an opportunity of carrying on their propaganda, though it is only just to add that many of the members were ignorant of the fact. The main item of the Sinn Fein programme is to establish an independent Ireland, but while its original constitution expressly states that its members were "not looking outside Ireland for the accomplishment of their aims," they certainly based some of their hopes on German aid during the World War, as they did on American support in financial matters. Sinn Fein affiliated itself with labour unrest, though Labour did not necessarily identify itself with Sinn Fein. As Mr Ernest Barker, a distinguished authority, has truly remarked, "the very vagueness of Sinn Fein tended, on the whole, to bring it under the dominance of extremists; and in that sense the identification generally made between Sinn Fein and the party of rebellion in 1916 is not altogether mistaken." The head of the Irish Volunteers, indelibly associated with the outbreak of violence in Dublin, was Professor Eoin MacNeill, an original member of the Gaelic League; and P. H. Pearse, the president of the short-lived Republic, was an

enthusiast in the resurrection of the old national language.

A strike of the Dublin transport workers in 1913, under the leadership of James Larkin, already identified with disturbances at Cork and Belfast, proved abortive, but was sufficient to show that there was grave discontent among an important section of the community. The seed of unrest thus sown was carefully watered by James Connolly, who became the leading spirit of Labour when Larkin went to the United States soon after war broke out. From it there arose the Citizen Army, which eventually identified itself with the Nationalist Volunteers, an independent body already in existence. In the winter of 1913–14 many of the recruits of the former were armed, and in June 1914 the two organizations had become sufficiently formidable for the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary to draw the attention of the Chief Secretary to the matter. "Each county," he complained, "will soon have a trained army far outnumbering the police, and those who control the Volunteers will be in a position to dictate to what extent the law of the land will be carried into effect." The Government did nothing.

That the Dublin strikers had legitimate grievances cannot be denied, and before either the Nationalist Volunteers or the Citizen Army came into existence the Ulster Volunteers were already in being as an example of what could be done in the matter of preparations. When the Home Rule Bill of 1912 passed through the Commons, over 200,000 Ulstermen who wished to maintain the Union, under the leadership of Sir Edward Carson, determined that they would have

none of it. Half that number were speedily in training, and as the Arms Act was allowed to lapse by some strange whim of the Government, there was comparatively little difficulty in obtaining weapons. Following Mr Redmond's appeal for recruits for the Army at the beginning of the war, there was dissension among the Nationalist Volunteers, with the result that those who supported the Irish leader took the name of National Volunteers, and the remainder reorganized themselves as the Irish Volunteers. It thus came about that when the elder sister was fighting for her existence Ireland was neither at unity with herself nor with England. She was divided into a series of armed camps—the Ulster Volunteers, the National Volunteers, the Irish Volunteers, and the Citizen Army. The last two were essentially anti-British. They obtained munitions from Germany and money from sympathizers in the United States.

Sir Edward Carson

It is now that the sinister figure of Roger Casement comes on the stage. Casement, previous to identifying himself with Sinn Fein, had been in the British consular service, from which he retired invalided. Some time in 1914 he crossed to America, whence he succeeded in getting to Germany, where he had communication with the Foreign Office in Berlin. Part of his mission was the formation of an Irish Brigade, to be equipped by the Fatherland and landed

in Ireland to free the country. Irish prisoners of war were particularly welcomed, and Casement visited various detention camps, endeavouring with plausible tongue and inciting literature to secure volunteers. It has been stated that only fifty-two prisoners consented to throw in their lot with him. Of these only one set foot in Ireland when the traitor was brought over by submarine, although there was a third person in the adventure, named or called Monteith. The fleet of enemy cruisers with 40,000 troops which had been promised failed to arrive; instead a captured Wilson liner disguised as a Norwegian tramp sailed from Wilhelmshaven with some 20,000 rifles and ammunition. She was intercepted by one of his Majesty's ships, but just outside Queenstown Harbour her crew blew her up. Officers and men put off in boats and were captured.

Roger Casement

On Good Friday, the 21st April, 1916, Casement and his bodyguard of two were discharged from the submarine and endeavoured to reach Banna Strand, Kerry, in a frail craft. The cockleshell capsized in shallow water. The reception of the liberators was no less cool than their sudden plunge in the Atlantic. Not a Volunteer came to welcome them, nor was one to be seen. Monteith is believed to have escaped to America. A peasant who found the little boat made no

secret of his discovery; arms which the little band had concealed were brought to light, the police informed, and Bailey, the former prisoner, and Casement tracked down and arrested. On the day that Dublin burst into flame, the 'Irish Ambassador' to Berlin was awaiting his trial for high treason.

The revolt was fixed for Easter Sunday, but at the last moment Professor MacNeill countermanded the order. The flood, however, could not be dammed, and on that day the Countess Markievicz proclaimed the Irish Republic from the steps of Liberty Hall, Dublin, the headquarters of the Transport Workers' Union. Armed members of the Citizen Army raided a quarry and secured 250 pounds of explosive, which they conveyed to Liberty Hall as a treasure of great price. MacNeill's instructions were openly defied on the following day, when Thomas MacDonagh and P. H. Pearse issued orders that the four city battalions and Company E 3 were to parade at 10 a.m.

The 'parade' duly took place. The Post Office was secured, the flag of the Republic hoisted, and the Provisional Government proclaimed from the foot of Nelson's Pillar. It is unnecessary to quote the whole of the document mentioned, but the two opening paragraphs show the treasonable nature of the project. They are as follows:

"IRISHMEN AND IRISHWOMEN: In the name of God and of the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom.

"Having organized and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organization, the

Ruins in Dublin, Easter 1916

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Irish Republican Brotherhood, and through her open military organizations, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, having patiently perfected her discipline, having resolutely waited for the right moment to reveal itself, she now seizes that moment, and, supported by her exiled children in America and by gallant allies in Europe, but relying in the first place on her own strength, she strikes in full confidence of victory."

This was signed by Thomas J. Clarke, Sean Macdermott, Thomas MacDonagh, P. H. Pearse, Eamonn Kent, James Connolly, and Joseph Plunkett, all of whom were either killed during the rebellion or afterward shot in accordance with the verdict of the ensuing court-martial.

Meanwhile looting and barricading were progressing; the City Hall and a newspaper office were seized and occupied. A policeman stationed at the Castle was shot dead, and four soldiers escorting wagons were killed as they passed down Sackville Street, quite unaware that anything untoward had happened. Five members of the Veterans' Corps, returning from a route march, were fatally wounded. Bridges and railway stations, two workhouses and a large factory, and the Central Magazine fell into the hands of the rebels. Trinity College, which commanded an important strategic position, was left alone, and here a few Colonial and other soldiers, together with some policemen, took shelter and put up a fine defence. It was only with difficulty that a comparatively few troops could be gathered for the purpose of placing a cordon across the city and garrisoning important points.

On the 25th Lord Wimborne, the Lord-Lieutenant,

placed Dublin under martial law. With the arrival of reinforcements the positions of the Sinn Feiners were gradually hemmed in. Artillery was brought to bear on the barricades and speedily destroyed them. Machine-guns turned on the City Hall and the captured newspaper office ensured their capitulation. On the following morning a gunboat shelled Liberty Hall, and it was also found necessary to subject the Post Office to similar treatment.

Several fires had already broken out and been dealt with, but one which started in the unoccupied reserve printing office of the *Irish Times* could not be got at on account of the sniping that was going on. Over 200 buildings were involved as a consequence, and the damage was estimated at £2,500,000. When the firemen eventually got to work, their praiseworthy and heroic efforts had to be abandoned and the men withdrawn. Engines and hose were left in the streets. In many cases the struggle was of a house-to-house character, and as most of the rebels were without uniform, the task of rounding them up and distinguishing between friend and foe was extremely difficult.

On the 29th, Pearse, Connolly, and MacDonagh surrendered unconditionally, and De Valera on the following day. The rebellion at Dublin was over; but it had not been quelled without considerable difficulty, and the Cabinet had deemed it necessary to send General Sir John Maxwell as Commander-in-Chief with large reinforcements to enforce martial law over the whole island. Over 1100 persons were wounded, including police and soldiers, and 327 killed.

Unfortunately, the disaffection was not confined to the capital, though it was there that it assumed its gravest aspect. At Skerries, a seaside resort some fifteen miles north of Dublin, the disaffected of the district thought the capture of the town and of the more important Marconi station would be nothing more than child's-play. They were not at all pleased to find that "the day when a German fleet dominates the Irish Sea and communications are cut off," which Casement asserted was to mark "the first day of Irish freedom," had apparently not arrived. Instead they found a substantial symbol of British sea-power in a destroyer crowded with troops and a couple of unfriendly gunboats. Seven soldiers, a few policemen and volunteers were prepared to sell their lives dearly should occasion warrant; but the rebels were not enamoured of the prospect, and retired. Outrages were committed at Castle Bellingham, County Louth; police were ambushed in a little wood at Rathgate, Meath; at Enniscorthy, Gorey, and Ferns—places which figured largely in the rebellion of 1798—there were disturbances but no casualties. In Kerry and Cork vengeance was wreaked on one or two unarmed members of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

Craughwell, Athenry, and Oranmore, in Galway, fell easy prey, but when the victors marched in triumph to seize the city of Galway they found a destroyer dominating the capital of Connaught. The insurgents scattered almost as soon as the first flash of cordite was visible, and retired to a safer retreat in Moyode Castle, near Athenry. The arms at their disposal were strangely reminiscent of the days of Vinegar

Hill, for some of the disturbers of the peace had no more modern weapons than pikes, pitchforks, rakes, and ancient shot-guns. The Sinn Feiners remained in their retreat until the word was passed that a body of Sherwood Foresters and police were marching on them. Then they promptly decamped, and shortly afterward disbanded. Most, if not all, of the insurgents were eventually arrested.

In his final message to the upholders of the Irish Republic before surrendering, Connolly avowed that "We have every confidence that our allies in Germany and kinsmen in America are straining every nerve to hasten matters on our behalf." Germany's effort at the moment was to send a battle-cruiser squadron, accompanied by light cruisers and destroyers, to make a hasty bombardment of Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft and an equally hasty withdrawal. It was a hussar-thrust which British light cruisers and destroyers endeavoured to parry without much likelihood of success, and was doubtless made with the idea that England would be rendered 'nervy' and feel disinclined to send troops to Ireland when her own shores were menaced.

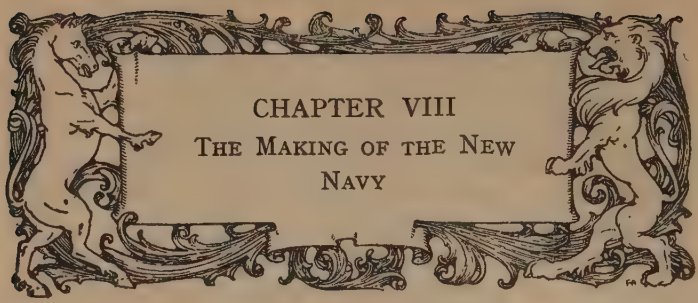
It is abundantly evident that the revolution was aided and abetted by gross laxity on the part of the Government. According to the finding of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the matter, "The main cause of the rebellion appears to be that lawlessness was allowed to grow up unchecked, and that Ireland for several years past has been administered on the principle that it was safer and more expedient to leave the law in abeyance if collision with any faction of the Irish people could thereby be

avoided." Mr Birrell was held primarily responsible, and resigned his office of Chief Secretary.

At the General Election of 1918 seventy-three Sinn Fein members were returned. They declined to take their seats at Westminster, however, and constituted themselves a National Government of Ireland, with Mr De Valera as President at their head. They repudiated the claim of the British Government to speak or act at the Peace Conference on behalf of Ireland, and claimed the right to send representatives to that august body. The strong agitation thus fomented compelled the British Government to maintain large military forces in Ireland, which meantime continued in a state of deplorable unrest.

Despite all attempts to discourage recruiting on the part of Sinn Feiners, 100,000 Irishmen flocked to the colours during the World War, and their gallant deeds on many a hard-fought field will remain in song and story long after the Rising of 1916 is forgotten. For the seizure of Dublin and other places was abortive because the people as a whole forgot their personal grievances and remembered only that civilization was fighting for its life.

As events had made it impossible to put the Home Rule Bill of 1914 into operation, a sub-committee of the Cabinet sat in October 1919, and the result of its deliberations was a proposal to create two separate Irish Parliaments, one for the Protestant counties of Ulster, and one for the rest of Ireland, and to set up a Supreme Council elected by the two Parliaments which should have a general direction of national affairs.



CHAPTER VIII

The Making of the New Navy

IN 1889 Lord Salisbury emphasized the enormous importance of the British Navy by insisting that it should be equal to that of the two strongest foreign Powers, but it was not until 1895–98 that it became in any real sense worthy of the term 'modern.' Following the Russo-Japanese War, we took to heart the maxim of our Eastern allies, "Let the victor look to the laces of his helmet." During Sir John Fisher's administration as First Sea Lord (1904–10), the British Navy underwent a complete transformation. Believing that concentration was the keynote of modern warfare, he boldly reduced the Mediterranean Fleet in order to strengthen that in the North Sea, which he held to be the main strategic theatre. France was no longer the menacing Power, but Germany. He reformed Osborne, accentuating the importance of the engineering branch of the sea-profession, introduced the idea of manœuvring at night without lights, abolished a number of obsolete drills which tired the sailors and did nothing else, developed the submarine, 'fathered' the seaplane. He cut down expenses, without in any way reducing the efficiency of the fleets,

turned out old-fashioned ships, and reorganized the whole service. Fisher was criticized in season and out of season. Folk thought he was jeopardizing our first line of defence. He adopted the water-tube boiler, the turbine, and oil fuel, and introduced the Dreadnought and the battle-cruiser. In his reforming zeal the Admiral was unhesitatingly supported by King Edward.

Lord Fisher

The *Dreadnought*, the first of a new type of battleship, was laid down at Portsmouth on October 2, 1905—the month and year of the centenary of Trafalgar. Soon after she was commissioned, late in 1906, Fisher sent her on an ocean trial of 9000 miles. Some of the critics were greatly scared at this, but the First Sea Lord took not the slightest notice. Had they stopped to think, they might have guessed the reason for this long voyage. It was done in order that any defect that might develop should be discovered before other units of similar design were launched. A great deal of secrecy was observed regarding the all-big-gun vessel, with the result that Germany was puzzled, as it was intended she should be, for it virtually made other types of battleships obsolete. Speed, armament, and armour-protection were combined in such a way as to introduce a new fashion. Her ten 12-in. guns were so arranged that eight could be used for firing a broadside, an enormous

advance on the armament of the biggest battleship of other Powers, none of which could bring to bear on a target more than four big guns. Since then many developments have taken place, the Dreadnoughts of the *Queen Elizabeth* class mounting eight 15-in. guns in four turrets, with a secondary armament of 6-in. guns. There has also been a marked increase in speed. The only post-Dreadnought struck by a torpedo during the Great War was the *Marlborough*, which was gravely damaged at the battle of Jutland, but nevertheless remained in the line for some time after being hit.

The battle-cruiser was designed as a big-gun ship with the speed of a fast cruiser, so as to be capable of arriving on the scene of action with the least possible delay. The pioneers of the *Invincible* class carried eight 12-in. guns, which could be fired as a broadside on either beam. The *Tiger*, completed in October 1914, was provided with 13·5-in. guns firing a shell of 1400 lb., and a secondary armament of twelve 6-in. guns instead of sixteen 4-in., as in the *Queen Mary*.

In 1903 the Secretary of State for War, in introducing the Army Estimates in the House of Commons, said, "Let us not confuse our minds by considering the position and action of the Navy." Sir John Fisher took the first opportunity he could to give his opinion on the subject. It was at the Royal Academy banquet. "The great fact which I come to," he remarked, "is that we are all realizing—the Navy and the Admiralty are realizing—that on the British Navy rests the British Empire. Nothing else is of any use without it, not even the Army." Here he turned in the direction of the War Secretary. "We

are different from Continental nations. No soldier of ours can go anywhere unless a sailor carries him there on his back." The wonderful way in which the British Expeditionary Force was convoyed across the Channel in the summer of 1914 is eloquent testimony to the Admiral's prescience.

In the light of subsequent events the naval manœuvres of July 1913 are exceptionally interesting. The British, or defending, fleet (Blue) was commanded by Admiral Sir George Callaghan, and consisted of 230 vessels, including twenty-five battleships and three battle-cruisers. The attacking fleet, representing the German Navy (Red), was in charge of Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, who had with him only 117 vessels, of which sixteen were battleships and two were battle-cruisers. Within forty-eight hours of the declaration of the make-believe war, Red, based between Dover and Great Yarmouth, appeared off the Humber, silenced the batteries, compelled the Blue destroyers and submarines to seek refuge in the river, disembarked 1000 men at Grimsby and double that number at Immingham, and theoretically landed 24,000 troops and destroyed railways, docks, wireless station, and other *matériel* of value. On the following day a similar number of soldiers were presumed to have gained a footing at Sunderland, which was raided and captured. Red also sent cruisers into the Atlantic. Blue, based on Scapa, the home of the Grand Fleet in the celebrated days of 'northern mists,' and other ports, failed to prevent these terrible happenings. A battle which was fought proved indecisive. The appointment of Sir John Jellicoe as Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleets on the outbreak of hostilities

almost twelve months later can scarcely have been unconnected with his brilliant conduct of the 'Red' fleet in 1913.

Recent evidence has shown that, notwithstanding Fisher's reforms, Britain's 'sure shield' was in anything but a state of real preparedness when war broke out, despite official assurance to the contrary and the encomiums of Mr Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty. Instead of overwhelming superiority, our margin was dangerously fine. To all intents and purposes the main base at Scapa Flow was virtually defenceless. There was not a single land battery, and the whole fleet in home waters had only seventy-six destroyers—twenty less than the Germans—and of these thirty-six were based on Harwich. There were no mines and very few mine-sweepers, no director-firing gear for the guns of the secondary armament of the battleships, no naval base on the east coast equipped with protection against attack by submarine; the range-finders and searchlights were inferior to those of the enemy; instead of bursting inside a ship the British shells burst outside; and many of the battle-cruisers were under-armoured, with the result that, following the battle of Jutland, additional protection had to be given to the magazines. When the Grand Fleet was denuded of the *Invincible* and the *Inflexible* by the necessity for bringing von Spee to book after the disaster off Coronel, the Grand Fleet was placed in what its Commander-in-Chief calls "a very questionable position" as regards battle-cruisers. Perhaps it was just as well that the public was not informed of the loss of the *Audacious* by a mine, although Germany knew of it, for the effective battle-

ships and battle-cruisers at Jellicoe's disposal then consisted of seventeen and five respectively, while the Germans had fifteen battleships, four battle-cruisers, and the armoured cruiser *Blücher*.

In the autumn of 1914 the Grand Fleet was actually compelled to leave the North Sea owing to the submarine menace. Within five weeks of the beginning of the war five guns were reported cracked or otherwise defective. Although the seizure of Zeebrugge was advocated by Jellicoe, Whitehall was far keener on the bombardment and capture of Heligoland, despite the unanimous opinions of competent officers on active service that the idea was impracticable.

Great Britain undertook to guard the North Sea and the English Channel. She shared the control of the Mediterranean with France, where Austria and Germany had three Dreadnought battleships, while France alone had eight. Of battle-cruisers there the enemy had one and Britain three, and France had eleven pre-Dreadnought battleships against the six of the Central Powers. The latter had also three armoured cruisers, Great Britain four, and France six. There were also light cruisers, submarines, and destroyers.

The ships based on home waters were divided into three main fleets, each distinct but co-operating in the general scheme. The First Fleet, in addition to the *Iron Duke*, Sir John Jellicoe's flagship, was made up of four battle squadrons, totalling nineteen Dreadnoughts and super-Dreadnoughts, eight pre-Dreadnoughts, four battle-cruisers, four armoured cruisers, four cruisers of the *Devonshire* class and four others, the light cruiser squadron of four ships, half a dozen

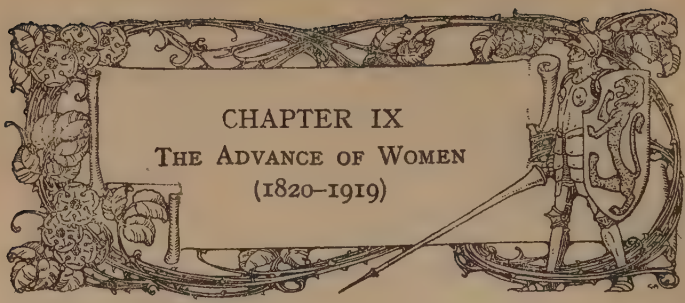
gunboats converted into mine-sweepers, two flotilla cruisers, and destroyers. The Second Fleet consisted of two battle squadrons, numbering sixteen pre-Dreadnoughts, the Fifth and Sixth Cruiser Squadrons of seven ships, seven mine-layers, two patrol flotillas, composed of two flotilla cruisers and thirty-five destroyers. Our oldest battleships constituted the two battle squadrons of the Third Fleet, and in addition there were five cruiser squadrons of obsolescent vessels. To these must be added numerous submarines, and two repair ships. Two destroyer-leaders, building in this country for Chile, were purchased and renamed the *Faulkner* and the *Broke*, and three monitors were purchased from the Brazilian Government, and subsequently known as the *Humber*, the *Mersey*, and the *Severn*. Two Dreadnoughts for Turkey were taken over and renamed the *Agincourt* and the *Erin*. The Admiralty was also authorized to use any British ship within the British Isles and the adjacent waters. Many private yachts were brought into the service for patrol work.

The effective German High Sea Fleet consisted of thirteen Dreadnoughts in commission, and three building, three battle-cruisers, sixteen older battleships, two armoured cruisers, fifteen light cruisers, and destroyers, torpedo-boats, and submarines. In the Far East were two armoured cruisers, three light cruisers, three old cruisers, four small vessels, and two destroyers. Three obsolete cruisers were in the vicinity of Australia, a light cruiser and three old cruisers in African waters, and a fast cruiser, the *Karlsruhe*, somewhere near the West Indies.

The figures given are those of the 4th August, 1914.

They naturally varied on both sides as the war progressed, more particularly in regard to the distribution and strength of the British Navy. Testimony to the "general efficiency" of the German Fleet and the "good design and fine equipment" of its ships has been given by Lord Jellicoe.

While the Grand Fleet held the North Sea, with its area of 200,000 square miles, the High Sea Fleet had the advantage of being able to operate in either the North Sea or the Baltic by means of the Kiel Canal, both exits of which were protected by powerful fortifications. The Russian Fleet in the Baltic was regarded by the Germans as almost a negligible force. It comprised four Dreadnoughts, ten armoured and protected cruisers, two light cruisers, some eighty destroyers, mostly of antiquated types, and twenty-four small submarines.



CHAPTER IX

The Advance of Women (1820–1919)

THE outlook for womanhood at the beginning of the nineteenth century is well illustrated by a letter which Collingwood wrote in 1805 regarding the education of his daughters. In it the Admiral begs his wife "above all things" to "keep novels out of their reach. They are the corrupters of tender minds: they exercise the imagination instead of the judgment; make them all desire to become the Julias and Cecilias of romance; and turn their heads before they are enabled to distinguish truth from fictions devised merely for entertainment. When they have passed their climacteric it will be time enough to begin novels." History, geography, mathematics, and geometry were recommended, but dancing and drawing were not forbidden. This was rather an 'advanced' outlook than otherwise. Provided a woman was 'prim and proper,' her education was regarded as of comparatively small moment.

When the Birkbeck Literary and Scientific Institution opened its classes to women in 1833 it was regarded as a notable advance in the higher education of the sex; but it was not until 1848 that Queen's College was founded in Harley Street, largely through the

instrumentality of Frederick Denison Maurice, and paved the way for further efforts. Over twenty years passed before the two oldest English universities recognized the movement by admitting female students. Girton College, started at Hitchin, was transferred to Cambridge in 1872, and Newnham was opened in 1875, but Lady Margaret Hall and Somerville College, Oxford, were not available until 1879. Having qualified for a degree, a woman is still debarred from taking it at both Oxford and Cambridge. More modern universities are not so deplorably archaic, and readily admit women.

Edinburgh was the first British seat of learning to open its doors to female students of medicine. This was in 1869, ten years after Dr Elizabeth Blackwell, a graduate of an American university, had been placed on the British Medical Register. A great deal of ignorant prejudice on the matter continues to exist, despite the excellent service rendered by female practitioners during the World War. Apparently this prejudice was not confined to the public, for hostilities had been going on for two years before the War Office woke up to the fact that such beings existed. A beginning was made when Dr Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and Dr Flora Murray took charge of Endell Street Military Hospital in August 1916. Eventually over 180 medical women had placed themselves at the disposal of King and country, of whom sixty-nine went abroad. As a student, Dr Garrett Anderson endeavoured to sit for the examinations of the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, but was refused, although in 1865 she obtained the licence of the Society of Apothecaries, which enabled her to practise. Five

years later she took her M.D. degree at the University of Paris, and in 1908 became the first woman elected as mayor in England. Women are now able to qualify at many of the provincial universities, but it required the faith that removes mountains to overcome the opposition to them.

The Law, which is a professional organization stronger than any trade union, fought to the last ditch before it surrendered its privileges. In 1919 the Incorporated Law Society opened its ranks to female solicitors, and the Inns of Court agreed to admit women as barristers. The Society of Architects also opened its doors, and these precedents forbid the continuance in any sphere of that prejudice which so long maintained a barrier against the admission of women to the professions. It was not until 1870 that a married woman enjoyed the right to her own property, and in 1886 the Guardianship of Infants Act enabled a mother to be guardian of her children after their father's death.

The publication in 1869 of John Stuart Mill's pamphlet entitled *The Subjection of Women* gave an immense fillip to the movement for a complete equality in all social, political, legal, and domestic relations. "That perception of the vast practical bearings of women's disabilities which found expression in the book," the philosopher tells us in his *Autobiography*, was acquired mainly through his wife's teaching, On the other hand, there was a multitude of the fair sex who regarded their sisters who wanted the vote as 'wild women,' and heartily supported the conclusion of Mrs E. Lynn Linton. She regarded political work as "both unwomanly and unnatural; self-destructive

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and socially hurtful; the sure precursor to the loss of men's personal consideration and to the letting loose the waters of strife; and—what egotism will not regard—the sure precursor to a future *régime* of redoubled coercion and suppression."

Despite petitions to Parliament, the militant attitude of various members of the Women's Social and Political Union, founded in 1903 by Mrs Pankhurst, and the introduction of Suffrage Bills, it was not until February 1918 that women over thirty years of age were accorded the vote. The passing of the Representation of the People Act secured this right for some 8,000,000 women. In the General Election of 1918 only one woman, a Sinn Feiner, was returned to Parliament.

Mrs Pankhurst

The magnificent response made by women in almost every department of human endeavour during the World War made the passing of the measure almost a foregone conclusion. The fair sex showed that they could do everything but fight, and many of them would have appreciated an opportunity to do that. The Women's Volunteer Reserve, clad in khaki, drilled like soldiers, went on route-marches, and generally paved the way for the coming of the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, the Women's Royal Naval Service, and the Women's Royal Air Force.

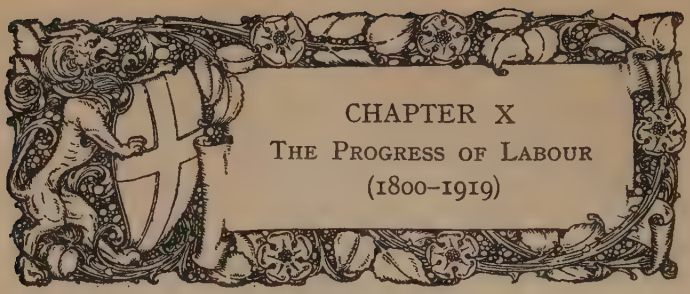
The war had been dragging on for seven months before dull and unimaginative officialdom realized

what business men and conservative bankers had long foreseen. In the middle of March 1915 the President of the Board of Trade "called attention" to the fairly obvious and well-understood fact that "if the full fighting power of the nation is to be put forth on the field of battle, the full working power of the nation must be made available to carry on its essential trades at home." Women were accordingly invited to register for war service, "industrial, agricultural, clerical, etc." The response was amazing; the Government organization for coping with the supply was lamentable, and calculated to extinguish the hope of doing one's 'bit.' No clear and definite policy emanated from Whitehall; it was the women themselves who insisted on being allowed to help their country, and hence the Right-to-Serve Procession that accompanied the women's deputation to Mr Lloyd George, then Minister of Munitions, in July 1915.

Women did wonderful work in feeding the guns. They toiled in machine shops turning shells, in danger-buildings of national and private factories making cordite cartridges, assembling fuses, pressing trotyl, filling grenades, examining components, and engaging in the thousand and one operations connected with the making of ammunition. Despite fires and the imminent risk of sudden death, those employed in explosive loading toiled on in winter and summer, in the extremes of heat and cold, for long hours at a stretch, without complaint. Though possibly few of the workers realized it, it was a fight between the women of Britain and the women of enemy countries, and the former won. Thousands of women assisted in the construction of guns, locomotives, ships, and aero-

planes, while the Women's Land Army helped to hold the Home Front as farm-hands, thatchers, tractor-drivers, timber-cutters, shepherds, milkers, threshers, gardeners, and so on. In 1918 no fewer than 300,000 women were working on the land.

In other ways women patrols and women police, the British Red Cross Society, the Order of St John of Jerusalem and its Voluntary Aid Detachments, the Young Women's Christian Association with its canteens, the Women's Hospital Corps, the Scottish Women's Hospitals, the various suffrage societies, aided and abetted the work of the fighting men. Post-women and female porters, railway guards and tram and omnibus conductors in skirts, made their appearance. Queen Mary's Work for Women Fund, started in the early days of the war, was founded to provide employment for as many as possible of the sex who had been thrown out of work, and over 300 branches were established throughout the country. Her Majesty also founded Queen Mary's Needlework Guild, its object being the making and collection of articles of clothing for those in need, as well as of additional comforts for soldiers and sailors and those in hospital. Both these efforts met with well-deserved success. Flag days for this and that charitable purpose were inaugurated, and the vast majority of people, including the so-called 'idle rich,' sought to alleviate the anxiety and sufferings of others and to help in the winning of the war.



CHAPTER X

The Progress of Labour (1800–1919)

THE struggle between Capital and Labour, evident since the Middle Ages, is the biggest problem of the modern world. The opening phase of the industrial revolution of the eighteenth century widened the gap instead of providing a bridge. While the introduction of machinery reduced the cost of production and was therefore of advantage to the manufacturer, it operated adversely for the labouring classes by reducing the demand for their services, and oftentimes the amount of skill required. In too many cases the fascination of handcraft gave place to something perilously approaching a deadly monotony. Riots broke out, and, with the object-lesson of the French Revolution confronting statesmen, legislation was introduced in 1799 and 1800 making it illegal for either masters or workmen to form combinations and unions. The idea was doubtless excellent, but in practice it worked better for the employers than for the operatives. Both were precluded from taking concerted action, but the man with the money usually found no difficulty in filling vacant places. The working classes had then no political power, for they had no votes,

and they very naturally resented what was undoubtedly a grave injustice. With the repeal in 1824 and 1825 of the Combination Acts, as they were called, trade unions came into being as a very natural corollary. Their usefulness, however, was strictly limited, for any attempt to restrain business, to leave work unfinished, or even to threaten to strike for better wages or improved conditions remained punishable offences. The relief afforded certainly did not seem to mark the beginning of a new heaven and a new earth. The power of Labour is so great to-day that it is difficult to believe that in 1834 half a dozen farm-hands in a remote Dorsetshire village were sentenced to transportation for seven years for having enrolled themselves by oath in the local branch of an agricultural union, whose main object was to secure a minimum wage of ten shillings a week. Public opinion ranged itself on the side of the unfortunate men, the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union organized a huge demonstration, and the men were pardoned. Despite rioting and similar militant measures, it was many years before Labour was regarded seriously as representing an important section of the commonwealth. The Reform Bill of 1832 did much for the middle class, and nothing at all for the masses. Meanwhile a certain amount of progress had at least been attempted by legislators who doubtless had the welfare of the workers at heart, though not always the means of enforcing their regulations. For instance, in 1802 apprentices in cotton and woollen mills were theoretically prohibited from working more than twelve hours a day, night-work was stopped, and certain provisions were

made for their education. Clergymen and justices of the peace were charged with seeing that the law was not broken in these respects—a duty more honoured in the breach than in the observance. The Act of 1819 was likewise open to abuse. By it children were not to work in cotton-mills until they were nine years of age, and the hours of those under sixteen were limited to twelve per day. On the other hand, time lost owing to the stoppage of machinery could be made up, thus leaving a loophole for unscrupulous employers. Other measures were introduced and passed, but it was not until a Commission presided over by Lord Ashley (later Earl of Shaftesbury) had revealed an appalling state of affairs that a Bill was introduced by him in 1842 prohibiting boys under ten and all girls and women from working underground. The payment of wages was not to be made in public-houses, and apprenticeship was limited to eight years. In 1850 the owners and managers of mines were first made responsible for the proper conduct of operations. During the same year the now powerful Amalgamated Society of Engineers came into existence by incorporating a number of societies in the north and south of England. Its members participated in a strike in 1852 over the questions of overtime and piecework, which lasted three months, and ended in the triumph of the masters. Despite the inordinate length of the struggle, it was marked by no acts of violence, thereby proving that Labour was not necessarily associated with anarchy, and public sympathy was aroused by the appeals of F. D. Maurice and Charles Kingsley. To-day the society numbers over 300,000 members.

Various Factory Acts continued to be added to those already on the Statute Book, but a great triumph was scored in 1867, when the agitation of a committee of various trade unions called the Glasgow Trades Council was largely responsible for the introduction of a measure entitled the Master and Servant Bill, which was passed. It rectified the injustice that made a breach of contract on the part of a servant a criminal offence, whereas a master could only be sued for damages. The Reform Bill of the same year also added to the strength of trade unionists by extending the franchise to many of them. A strike of engineers at Newcastle in 1871 for the purpose of enforcing a nine hours day was ended by the acceptance of a fifty-four hours week by the employers. Further strikes took place in 1878, 1879, and 1880, during a period of depression. Masters were made responsible for accidents happening to their workpeople by the Employers' Liability Act of 1880. An Act of 1874 protecting trade unions from being sued, and upset by a court of law in 1903, was re-established by another Act in 1906. In 1912 Members of Parliament voted themselves £400 a year for their services, largely because the representatives of Labour found it difficult to meet their expenses as Members of Parliament. That year was also notable because it afforded an example of the grave disadvantages to the general public when Capital and Labour fail to arrive at a satisfactory solution of disputes. Within a few months miners and transport workers were on strike, and the nation had an opportunity of appreciating the rule of a powerful minority.

The first Trade Union Congress met in Manchester

in 1868, when the membership represented was 118,367; in the year before the outbreak of the World War a similar series of meetings took place in the same city, when the number had swollen to over 2,250,000, and the United States, France, Canada, and Germany sent delegates. The Workers' Educational Association, founded in 1903, does excellent work for both skilled and unskilled labour of both sexes by means of its tutorial classes.

To palliate painful facts is not the mission of History. Let us frankly admit that mutual suspicion characterized the attitude of the two opposing parties during the conflict of 1914–18. This was due very largely to the suspicion of Labour that Capital was 'profiteering'—a notion only too often founded on fact when balance-sheets appeared—and to the belief of Capital that Labour was doing the same. Had Dr Johnson been living, he would doubtless have reassured both that "Patriotism is the last resort of a scoundrel." To the men in the trenches and at sea the situation at home was full of grim irony that gave rise to embittered thoughts, yet did not preclude them from 'carrying on,' though their own remuneration was scarcely more than a pittance. There is a patriotism that lends 15s. 6d. in the sure and certain hope of reaping £1, a patriotism that exacts considerably higher interest for its services, and a patriotism that is beyond price. Civilization was saved by the last. It is only just to add, however, that at the outbreak of war in 1914 the strike in the building trade in London came to an abrupt end after a struggle that had lasted six months.

Unfortunately, it was not long before various bodies

of workers began to air their grievances, some of them doubtless legitimate. A threatened strike of miners in West Yorkshire was averted in the early part of 1915 by the men's demands being granted while the war lasted. Trouble with railwaymen was avoided by a process of bargaining which only staved off the matter. It came to a head again in August 1916, and resulted in a further increase of wages. Far more serious was a cessation of work on the part of the shipwrights of the Clyde, who calmly refused the advice of their own chosen leaders. It was a long time before the majority of workers clearly realized that there was truth in Mr Lloyd George's statement that the war was not going to be fought mainly on the battlefields of the Continent, but in the workshops of France and Great Britain. In the middle of March 1915 Lord Kitchener, Secretary for War, frankly admitted that the output of munitions was not equal to our necessities, but the present and future supply was causing him "very serious anxiety." A contributing cause "on more than one occasion" was "the restrictions of trade unions." He refrained from mentioning that the muddles and delays of Government officials, a too rigid censorship that displayed Micawber-like tendencies, and a difficulty in reconciling the statements of various public men were equally responsible. Judging by his utterances, Mr Lloyd George attributed slackness mainly to drink. When the Government showed a tendency to tackle the question of increased production with something approaching seriousness by forming the North-East Coast Armaments Committee in April 1915, where representatives of the men as well as of employers and

the Government could give their views and advice, it was welcomed whole-heartedly. "We do not want any more speeches about the failings of the workers, the employers, or the Government; we want to pull together and get on with it. You may tell Lord Kitchener that we shall deliver the goods." So ran a resolution passed at a meeting of Newcastle engineers and forwarded to Mr Asquith, the Prime Minister.

Further proof that it was not entirely the fault of the men that prevented the Army from obtaining adequate supplies of war material was afforded by the appointment of a Munitions of War Committee during the same month to supersede the Cabinet Committee that was supposed to have been engaged on the task since September 1914, the daring exposure by *The Times* of the lack of high-explosive shells, the formation of a Coalition Ministry—including a Labour member in the person of Mr Arthur Henderson as President of the Board of Education—and the establishment of a Ministry of Munitions under Mr Lloyd George. The Munitions of War Act (1915) provided that disputes should be referred to arbitration, to the exclusion of strikes and lock-outs, that skilled men should be brought back from the Army to work in munition factories, that a mobile munitions corps should be enrolled voluntarily whose contracts should be enforceable by Munitions Courts, that leaving certificates must be obtained by workers wishing to transfer from one firm to another, that trade-union restrictions on output should be cancelled during the war, and that profits should be limited. Power had already been given by Parliament for the Government to take over and control factories, and by the end of

the year there were over 4000 controlled establishments and ninety-five national factories.

Within a fortnight of the passing of the measure the South Wales miners were on strike over the matter of a new wages agreement. The dispute was adjusted, but the formal award was not regarded as satisfactory by the men, and they again forsook their picks and shovels in August, when they obtained what they asked. Less than a year later a further increase in wages was demanded, whereupon the Government took over the coal-field and granted a rise of 15 per cent.

At the Trades Union Congress held at Bristol in September 1915, delegates representing over 2,600,000 members were present, and Mr Lloyd George told them in no uncertain language that Labour had failed to fulfil its obligations. The answer of the working man was the formation of a Triple Alliance of miners, railwaymen, and transport workers.

In the Cabinet formed by Mr Lloyd George at the end of 1916 two new ministries were filled by Labour members—that of Labour by Mr J. Hodge, and that of Pensions by Mr G. N. Barnes. Mr A. Henderson became a Minister without portfolio, but resigned in August 1917, largely over the question of an International Socialist Congress to be held at Stockholm, which it was hoped Allied, neutral, and enemy delegates would attend. The Labour Party refused to have anything to do with the project.

In the General Election that followed the Armistice in 1918 Labour secured nearly 2,500,000 votes for her 362 candidates, of whom sixty-three obtained seats, twenty-five representing mining constituencies. Mr G. N. Barnes remained at his previous post, and

Mr George Roberts became head of the Ministry of Food. The Ministry of Labour was allocated to Sir Robert Horne, and Sir L. Worthington Evans, formerly Minister of Blockade, took charge of Pensions. The latter appointment was quite in keeping with a decision that made Mr Walter Long, an expert agriculturist, First Lord of the Admiralty.

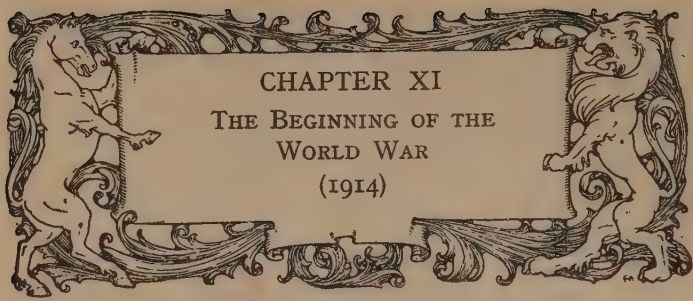
Trade Unionism at the close of the Great War had secured a powerful position, and many of the principles for which in past years it had fought were no longer matters of dispute. Recognition of the right to combine and of the union had even been granted by the State in such a close preserve as the Post Office, and although this was denied to the police, they were permitted to organize so as to be able to represent grievances through their chosen spokesmen. Collective bargaining, minimum rates of pay, and standard hours have all come to be regarded as desirable and necessary.

The Joint Industrial Councils set up as a result of the recommendations of a Parliamentary Committee known as the Whitley Commission provide a common platform for masters and men, where they may take counsel together on all questions in which they are equally interested. These trade councils will probably be given power to enforce their enactments upon all engaged in the respective industries.

Mainly owing to dissatisfaction among the miners, a Coal Industry Commission under the chairmanship of Mr Justice Sankey sat in 1919, and heard a great deal of evidence regarding conditions and profits and the pros and cons of nationalization. In the interim report a number of recommendations were made, including the concession to the colliery worker of a voice in the

control of the mine, a seven-hour day, an increase in wages of 2s. per shift or day for adults, the limitation of colliery profits to 1s. 2d. per ton of coal raised, and a levy of one penny per ton for the improvement of housing conditions in colliery districts. The unification and reorganization of the industry were also suggested, and in the final report nationalization was regarded as the interpretation of that principle, but to this the Government would not agree.

Toward the close of the following September 'direct action' was taken by the National Union of Railwaymen on a question of wages, and a strike was proclaimed. The public showed in no uncertain way that they were entirely out of sympathy with the cessation of work. Thousands of volunteers assisted by driving motor lorries and other means of transport, while those who were sufficiently skilled helped to maintain a limited service on some of the railways. On the ninth day the dispute was settled by the Government guaranteeing that the rates of pay then in force should not be altered before the end of September 1920, and that no adult railwayman should receive less than 51s. per week so long as the cost of living remained at not less than 110 per cent. above pre-war level. Perhaps the most significant departure in this strike was the action of other great unions which combined to set up what amounted to a conciliation committee. These men arbitrated between the Railway Union and the Government, and their action was the first instance in an industrial dispute of such friendly interference on the part of Labour.



CHAPTER XI

The Beginning of the World War (1914)

ON the 28th June, 1914, when British naval squadrons were at Kiel celebrating the completion of the widening of the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal, pistol-shots were fired at Serajevo, the capital of Bosnia, which killed the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his morganatic wife and were used as a pretext to set the world in flames. The Balkans had already proved to be the powder-magazine of Europe, but hitherto the area of the conflagration had been limited. This time it was to involve the two hemispheres. Rightly or wrongly, the crime of the assassination of the heir to the throne of the Dual Monarchy was laid at the door of Serbia, for one of the assassins implicated was alleged to be a member of the Greater Serbian Party. While the Press of other countries were showing in all sincerity the utmost sympathy with the Emperor Francis Joseph, an aged monarch whose life had been embittered by recurring tragedy, the newspapers of Austria-Hungary did much to inflame public opinion in Vienna and elsewhere by stating that the Serbian Government had encouraged the nationalist sympathies of their kinsmen in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and were there-

fore responsible. They omitted to mention that the annexation of the two provinces in 1908 was a direct infraction of the Treaty of Berlin of 1878.

For three weeks Austria played a waiting game, during which Sir Edward Grey, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, endeavoured to pour oil on the troubled waters by advising Serbia to be conciliatory, and using his influence with Russia, the Big Father of the Slav peoples, to the same purpose. On the 23rd July there came a bolt from the blue. It took the form of an ultimatum from Vienna to Belgrade, with a time-limit of forty-eight hours only. Serbia's reply was eminently moderate, so much so that she practically agreed to all the main points, and requested that those remaining outstanding might be submitted to arbitration. Had Austria and Germany desired peace they could have had it. Of that there is not the slightest doubt. Sir Edward Grey worked hard in favour of a settlement without resort to arms, but to no good effect. On the 28th Austria declared war on Serbia, and the following day Russia ordered a partial mobilization in her southern provinces. The British Foreign Secretary still endeavoured to prevent war, and the Italian, French, and Russian Ambassadors accepted his invitation to discuss means toward a settlement, but Germany refused to participate.

About midnight on the 29th, Sir Edward Grey received a telegram from our Ambassador at Berlin saying that the German Chancellor had made a strong bid for British neutrality. "He said that it was clear, so far as he was able to judge the main principle which governed British policy, that Great Britain

would never stand by and allow France to be crushed in any conflict there might be. That, however, was not the object at which Germany aimed. Provided the neutrality of Great Britain were certain, every assurance would be given to the British Government that the Imperial Government aimed at no territorial acquisitions at the expense of France should they prove victorious in any war that might ensue. I questioned his Excellency about the French colonies, and he said that he was unable to give a similar undertaking in that respect. . . . It depended upon the action of France what operations Germany might be forced to enter upon in Belgium, but when the war was over, Belgian integrity would be respected if she had not sided against Germany."

Sir Edward Grey

The British Government quite rightly refused to entertain the perfidious proposal. Sir Edward Grey pointed out that the Chancellor virtually asked England to stand by and see France beaten and her colonies captured, provided that her European territory was not taken. This meant, of course, that the Republic would be so crushed that she would necessarily come under German domination. "Altogether apart from that," he added, "it would be a disgrace for us to make this bargain with Germany at the expense of France, a disgrace from which the good name of this country would never recover." Sir E.

Goschen was requested to tell the Chancellor that "the one way of maintaining the good relations between England and Germany is that they should continue to work together to preserve the peace of Europe; if we succeed in this object, the mutual relations of Germany and England will, I believe, be *ipso facto* improved and strengthened."

On the 3rd August Mr Asquith announced in the House of Commons that Great Britain had not made an engagement to send the Expeditionary Force out of the country, but he added the significant fact that the mobilization of the Army was taking place. Just before reaching the House he had been informed that the King had received the following telegram from the King of the Belgians:

"Remembering the numerous proofs of your Majesty's friendship and that of your predecessors, and the friendly attitude of England in 1870, and the proof of friendship you have just given us again, I make a supreme appeal to the diplomatic intervention of your Majesty's Government to safeguard the integrity of Belgium."

The time for diplomatic intervention was gone. The telegram was read in the afternoon. When the sitting was resumed later, Sir Edward Grey announced that during the interim further information had come to hand from the Belgian Legation in London:

"Germany sent yesterday evening at 7 o'clock a Note proposing to Belgium friendly neutrality covering free passage on Belgian territory, promising maintenance of independence of the kingdom and possessions at the conclusion of peace, and threatening,

in case of refusal, to treat Belgium as an enemy. A time-limit of twelve hours was fixed for a reply. Belgium has answered that an attack on her neutrality would be a flagrant violation of the rights of nations, that to accept the German proposals would be to sacrifice the honour of a nation conscious of its duty. Belgium is firmly resolved to repel aggression by all possible means."

Austria's ultimatum to Serbia had a time-limit of forty-eight hours; Germany gave Belgium, a State whose neutrality she guaranteed, but twelve hours to decide between peace and war. Could there be a more damning indictment of the two Empires? While Sir Edward Grey was addressing the representatives of the British people, a Prussian regiment was busying itself by deploying along the Belgian frontier in the neighbourhood of Moresnet, near Aix-la-Chapelle, and obstructing the roads. The neutrality of the little duchy of Luxemburg, with its miniature army of 300 gendarmes and volunteers, had already been violated.

The perfidy of the Power that for years had been a menace to its neighbours was abundantly clear. By Article VII of the Treaty of London (1839), not only Great Britain, France, Austria, and Russia, but Prussia herself recognized Belgium as an "independent and perpetually neutral State." Moreover, in 1870, at the time of the Franco-German War, Germany and France entered into a treaty with Great Britain, whereby the latter Power undertook to defend Belgium with the belligerent who maintained that country's integrity against the one who violated it, should such an event happen. If further confirmation

were necessary as to the exact status of a neutral Power, it is to be found in one of the Articles drawn up by the Great Powers at the Hague Peace Conference of 1907: "Belligerents are forbidden to move across the territory of a neutral Power troops or convoys, either of munitions of war or supplies."

Bethmann-Hollweg

On the 4th August Great Britain declared war against Germany. "Do you mean to say," the Imperial Chancellor asked Sir Edward Goschen, "that you are going to make war for a scrap of paper?" "Unfortunately, sir," was the Ambassador's answer, "that scrap of paper contains our signature as well as yours."

Germany flung aside all codes of morality. Before Britain's ultimatum had expired the German Government lyingly announced that England had declared war, as on August 2nd she had violated French territory. Bethmann-Hollweg, the Imperial Chancellor, boldly defended the policy in the Reichstag, and was supported by the nation. "We are now in a state of necessity," he said, "and necessity knows no law. We were compelled to override the just protests of the Luxemburg and Belgian Governments. The wrong—I speak openly—that we are committing we will endeavour to make good as soon as our military goal is reached. Anybody who is threatened as we are threatened, and is fighting for his highest

possessions, can have only one thought—how he is to hack his way through." Nietzsche's blond beast was abroad threatening Treitschke's "monkish virtue."

Did Belgium keep true to her obligations of neutrality? When the troops of the Fatherland entered Brussels they professed to have found incriminating documents respecting a Convention with the Entente for the defence of Belgian territory. No such arrangement was ever made, although conversations had taken place between the British military attaché and the Belgian General Staff regarding the defence of the country should it be attacked—a perfectly legitimate *rôle* for a guaranteeing Power to assume.

Belgium, realizing that eventually the ever-increasing burden of armaments must result in a terrible war, had endeavoured to set her military house in order. Long the cockpit of Europe, she fully understood that there was at least the possibility, if not the probability, of sacred trusts being disregarded, and it was well to be prepared. In 1902, as her Prime Minister stated in his refutation of the charges made against her and referred to above, Belgium had strengthened her cadres. After debating the questions during 1905 and 1906, it was decided to complete the fortifications of Antwerp "and to raise her defensive organization to a pitch commensurate with the offensive force then at the disposal of the armies of Europe." The artillery was brought up to date, and finally compulsory service instituted. "These stages," adds M. J. Van den Heuvel, "were arrived at with considerable difficulty because the nation, relying on treaties and determined herself to observe neutrality with the strictest impartiality, could not believe that

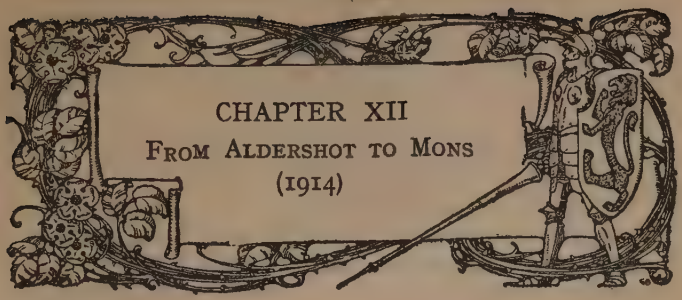
in the twentieth century anyone could be cruel enough to think of violating the rights of a peaceful people."

The Kaiser's personal complicity in the World War is shown in a conversation which took place between him and Albert I, King of the Belgians, in November 1913, and revealed by M. Jules Cambon, the French Ambassador in Berlin. The Emperor was "completely changed," and appeared to be no longer "the champion of peace against the bellicose tendencies of certain German parties." He thought that war with France was "inevitable," in which contention he was supported by General von Moltke, Chief of the General Staff, who was with him at the interview, and that the "overwhelming superiority" of his army would ensure "certain success."

Wilhelm II

"This time," he told King Albert, "we must settle the business once and for all, and your Majesty can have no idea of the irresistible enthusiasm which on that day will sweep over the whole German people." In commenting on this extremely undiplomatic chat in a letter sent two weeks later, M. Cambon prophetically suggested that the Emperor and Moltke "may have had for their object to impress the King of the Belgians and to induce him to oppose no resistance in the event of a conflict breaking out with us."

All the available evidence goes to prove that Germany was bent on mischief, although it may have been that the murders at Serajevo precipitated the event somewhat. Instead of throwing in her lot with her allies, Italy remained neutral. Her engagement with Germany and the Dual Monarchy was only in the event of a defensive war, whereas in her opinion their operations were offensive. The affair in Bosnia afforded the Fatherland an excuse when perhaps a little later it would have been more difficult to find one. Germany argued that the Entente would be taken at a grave disadvantage. In the minds of her statesmen the trouble in Ireland portended civil war, which would effectively preclude Great Britain from entering the contest; France was degenerate, her army effete, her political affairs chaotic, the reintroduction of the three years' military service system obnoxious, and ministerial crises undermined efficiency; discontent ruled Russia, and her army was but ill prepared. The pear was ripe, and a short campaign would pluck it from the tree.



CHAPTER XII
From Aldershot to Mons (1914)

THE war early proved that it was to be neither the short nor the easy campaign that the Germans had fondly anticipated, despite the use of barbarous methods of warfare instigated by themselves, such as fighting by gas, liquid fire, and the bombardment of open towns. Before hostilities were over, no fewer than twenty-four countries had entered into the contest against the four enemy Powers, as the following table shows, and three had severed diplomatic relations with Germany.

Allies

Country	Date of Entry	Country	Date of Entry
Serbia	July 28, 1914	Cuba	Apr. 7, 1917
Russia	Aug. 1, 1914	Panama	Apr. 10, 1917
Belgium	Aug. 2, 1914	Greece	June 30, 1917
France	Aug. 3, 1914	Siam	July 22, 1917
Great Britain	Aug. 4, 1914	Liberia	Aug. 8, 1917
Montenegro	Aug. 7, 1914	China	Aug. 16, 1917
Japan	Aug. 23, 1914	Brazil	Oct. 27, 1917
Italy	May 23, 1915	Guatemala	Apr. 24, 1918
Albania	Jan. 2, 1916	Costa Rica	Apr. 27, 1918
Portugal	Mar. 8, 1916	Nicaragua	May 8, 1918
Rumania	Aug. 27, 1916	Hayti	July 15, 1918
U.S.A.	Apr. 6, 1917	Honduras	July 19, 1918

ENEMY

Country	Date of Entry	Country	Date of Entry
Austria-Hungary	July 28, 1914	Turkey	Nov. 1, 1914
Germany	Aug. 1, 1914	Bulgaria	Oct. 14, 1915

Mobilized armies engaged	59,176,800
Reported casualties on all fronts	33,500,000
Killed and died of wounds and disease	7,781,000
Prisoners and missing	7,080,500

Perhaps it may be as well at this early stage to draw attention to Lord Haig's insistence on the fact that the operations of the four and a quarter years' struggle on the Western Front must be regarded as a single continuous campaign. In them he sees history repeating itself, revealing the same general features, the same indispensable stages common to all conclusive battles. "There is," he says in his final dispatch of the 21st March, 1919, "in the first instance the preliminary stage of the campaign, in which the opposing forces seek to deploy and manœuvre for position, endeavouring while doing so to gain some quick advantage which might be pushed home to quick decision. This phase came to an end in the present war with the creation of continuous trench lines from the Swiss frontier to the sea." It is the former phase with which we have to deal in this chapter.

Regarding the abnormal duration of the conflict, the Field-Marshal correctly remarks that we were "unprepared for war, or at any rate for a war of such magnitude," deficient in trained men and military *matériel*, and without machinery for producing either with the requisite rapidity. Only

after two and a half years of conflict was the high-water mark of our fighting strength in infantry reached." The artillery became "approximately adequate" to major operations in midsummer 1916, but it was only in 1918 that the situation regarding that arm was without anxiety. For nearly two years the British armies were unable adequately to assist France and Belgium, throwing on the former an excessive burden, "the full effect of which has been felt all through the war and directly influenced its length." By establishing themselves in Belgium and Northern France at the outset, the Germans were enabled to hurl vast numbers of troops against France and Russia. Sir Douglas Haig pays a magnificent tribute to the old "Contemptibles" by adding, "What might have been the effect of British intervention on a larger scale in the earlier stages of the war is shown by what was actually achieved by our original Expeditionary Force." A little later he remarks that "The margin by which the German onrush in 1914 was stemmed was so narrow and the subsequent struggle so severe that the word 'miraculous' is hardly too strong a term to describe the recovery and ultimate victory of the Allies."

Sir Douglas gives interesting instances from previous modern campaigns to show that the side completely prepared for war almost invariably gained a quick and complete success against its less efficient rival. "In 1866 and 1870," he says, "Austria, and then France, were overwhelmed at the outset by means of superior preparation. The initial advantages derived therefrom were followed up by such vigorous and ruthless action, regardless of loss, that

there was no time to recover from the first stunning blows. The German plan of campaign in the present war was undoubtedly based on similar principles." Differences in speech and temperament, in methods of organization, equipment, and supply, also handicapped the Allies.

The idea that a war can be won by standing on the defensive is regarded by the Field-Marshal as "a dangerous fallacy, which owes its inception to the desire to evade the price of victory." Quite apart from this, the reason why the British attacked whenever possible was because the *rôle* of waiting for the opposing forces to attack is bad for the moral of the troops, who imagine that their opponents are stronger in every way than themselves. It also involves the loss of the initiative, and consequently the enemy can spring surprises.

We shall see later that the cavalry proved exceedingly useful by covering the British flanks during the retreat from Mons, and on many subsequent occasions. We took the field with 486 light and medium guns and no heavy pieces, and there was only one machine gun to approximately 500 infantrymen. It was not until the battle of Arras (1917) that a fuse was used that easily and quickly destroyed wire entanglements. On a mere handful of men, with no experience of war after the 'grand manner,' with nothing adequate beyond their dogged tenacity and wonderful fighting qualities, Britain staked her all.

The Belgians offered a magnificent resistance while the enemy was hacking a way through their country. Her troops worked wonders by their defence, and miracles for the Allies by giving them time. The

The Wreck of Liége

Photo, Alfieri

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tragedy developed with relentless irony. Louvain was occupied and destroyed, Brussels abandoned, Liége and Namur captured, Dinant smashed, Termonde bombarded. The land of the Flemings and Walloons, like Jerusalem of old, became largely a heap of ruins. Yet her story will ring down the ages that are to come as something more than an inspiring legend; it will tell how a country proudly preferred annihilation to dishonour. The Belgian Army numbered not more than 200,000 men, whereas the Kaiser had at least 3,100,000 troops at his immediate disposal, with probably double that number on the *Ersatzreserve* or liable for service. Within a fortnight over 1,000,000 men in field-grey were marching.

King Albert

King George took leave of the first British Expeditionary Force at Aldershot on the 11th August, and a week later it was officially announced that it had been safely landed on French soil without a single casualty. On the 14th Sir John French, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, who had won renown as a cavalry leader during the Boer War, arrived in Paris. The little army consisted of the 1st and 2nd Divisions of the 1st Army Corps under Lieut.-General Sir Douglas Haig; the 3rd and 5th Divisions of the 2nd Army Corps under Lieut.-General Sir James Grierson, who died on the 17th in France and was succeeded by General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien; the Cavalry Division under

Major-General E. H. H. Allenby; and the 19th Infantry Brigade. Before the end of the month the 4th Division had arrived, and, with the 19th Infantry Brigade, became the 3rd Army Corps. During the opening phase the number of British combatants did not exceed 60,000, which shows how ill-prepared Britain was for anything approaching either a big or a long war.

Viscount French

The instructions issued to Sir John French by Lord Kitchener, who had been appointed Secretary for War on the 5th August, were "to support and co-operate with the French Army against our common enemies," but as the numerical strength of the force was "strictly limited," the greatest care was to be exercised "toward a minimum of losses and wastage."

The plans of Joffre, the French Commander-in-Chief, were originally based on a prompt and vigorous offensive. The lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine were invaded, but while a footing was secured in the former, the latter operation was a disastrous failure. With the coming of the British the General's projects were altered in order to render assistance to the gallant Belgians by relieving the crushing weight of the German advance, the British forming a connecting link between the Belgians holding Antwerp and the French troops in the valley of the Meuse. On the 21st and 22nd August the British took up a position

extending along the line of the Condé Canal from Condé, on the west, through Mons, to Binche, on the east. From Condé to Mons the line was occupied by Smith-Dorrien's 2nd Corps; to their right from Mons the 1st Corps under Haig was posted; and Chetwode's 5th Cavalry Brigade was placed at Binche. Four brigades of the Cavalry Division, led by General Allenby, formed the reserve. The front covered nearly twenty miles.

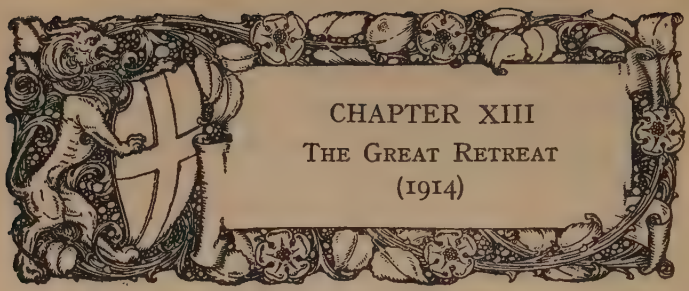
In the preliminary reconnaissance Chetwode's cavalry, assisted by a few squadrons of the Cavalry Division, penetrated as far as Soignies, on the Mons–Brussels road, meeting with no undue opposition. Several skirmishes and at least one charge took place with advanced German cavalry, in all of which the British proved their fighting qualities and showed to great advantage. Though these were minor affairs, they greatly encouraged the men, who formed the opinion that in small bodies the Germans were not nearly such super-soldiers as they had been made out to be. They brought back the news that von Kluck was advancing in considerable strength: they were not to know that the troops coming on to the attack numbered no fewer than five army corps. Joffre's preliminary information was that at most two corps, with perhaps a single cavalry division, were in front of the British position.

On Sunday, the 23rd, the British had dug their trenches and were awaiting the coming of the enemy, who endeavoured to find out the strength of the position by aeroplane scouts. Shortly after noon the attack developed along the entire front, with heavy artillery fire from field guns and howitzers. It was

most violent on the right of the position that extended from Mons to Bray. Soon the infantry were discernible, moving along in dense masses, or, as an eye-witness puts it, "solid square blocks." Aircraft hummed above, 'spotting' for the German guns and signalling by means of smoke bombs. They quickly got the range, and one soldier summed up what followed as "something worse than the mouth of hell," the infantry coming up in swarms, "just as if a hive had been overturned and all the bees were let loose."

The weight of the attack naturally varied in different parts of the line. In some places the artillery fire was exceedingly heavy, so that "they fairly mopped us up," while in others the grey-green infantry, strongly supported by the cavalry, came up again and again, only to be sent staggering back with the assistance of cold steel and streams of bullets from the rear ranks. In Mons itself trees had been felled to barricade thoroughfares and bridges, and a private in the 1st Lincolns vouches for the truth of the statement that when the Huns approached they were driving women and children in front of them. It was then, and not till then, that the troops holding this particular section retired. They had no desire to wreak their vengeance on civilians. A very heavy attack launched against the right left the extreme flank dangerously exposed, necessitating the withdrawal of the 5th Cavalry Brigade from Binche, which was speedily occupied by the enemy. Haig fell back to some high ground south of the village of Bray. As a consequence of these movements Mons, held by General Hubert

Hamilton, presented a somewhat dangerous salient, with exposed flanks, and Smith-Dorrien was directed not to keep his troops there too long, and if seriously threatened to draw back the centre behind the town.



CHAPTER XIII

The Great Retreat (1914)

LATE in the afternoon Sir John French received a telegram from Joffre that might well have filled the heart of a less resolute commander with dismay. The message revealed the unwelcome news that at least three enemy army corps were advancing on the British position, and at the same time a corps was engaging in a turning movement from Tournai. More alarming still, on the previous day the Germans had secured possession of the passages of the Sambre between Charleroi and Namur, compelling the retirement of the two reserve French divisions and the 5th French Army on the immediate right of the British. The information was confirmed by aeroplanes, and Sir John French had no alternative but to retreat, otherwise the whole force would most certainly have been enveloped. On his right were the Germans pursuing Lanrezac's army, in front of him were probably 200,000 of the enemy, and on his left possibly 50,000. Following the method of Napoleon, who always had an alternative plan of operations should the first miscarry, a position in the rear had already been reconnoitred. It rested on the fortress of Maubeuge

on the right, and extended westward to Jenlain, south-east of Valenciennes, on the left. While it afforded a few good artillery positions, report had it that it would not be easy to hold on account of standing crops and buildings, which would make the choosing of sites for trenches very difficult and limit the field of fire in many important positions. However, French determined on retirement to this position at daybreak on the 24th.

Worn out with the arduous labours of the day, neither infantry nor artillery was allowed rest during the ensuing night, for fighting continued along the whole line without cessation. Despite the fact that they had been obliged to give ground, the troops had put up an excellent defence, and had matters been equally propitious elsewhere doubtless all would have been well. Blissfully ignorant that the French troops on their right were retreating, that there was little or no support on the left, and therefore both flanks were exposed, the men could see no reason for what was only too obvious to the Staff. "We did not like the order to retire at Mons. We knew we were doing better than the Germans, and inflicting heavy losses on them": so wrote one Tommy, and other letters show that he was voicing the opinion of many of his fellows. The general idea was that the movement had been arranged beforehand for the purpose of "leading them on." This was repeated so often that it became a legend as provocative of optimistic enthusiasm as that of the Russian troops passing through England on their way to France, a myth that was for a long time widely believed throughout Britain.

To fall back without disclosing the process too

obviously to the enemy was the only hope. With this end in view a powerful demonstration was made by the 2nd Division of Haig's 1st Corps, supported by artillery, as though to retake Binche. Under cover of this, Smith-Dorrien's 2nd Corps, which had sustained heavier casualties than the 1st Corps, began to retire, though in doing so Hamilton's much-tried 3rd Division suffered considerably, and of the Cheshires only 198 officers and men were left out of 1034. Fortunately, the 19th Infantry Brigade reinforced Smith-Dorrien. Scarcely had the last British soldier left Mons than it was in the hands of the oncoming Germans, who harried the retreating army with shell-fire, and pushed on their infantry. Yet the British held their own, fighting heavy rearguard actions, and not once did the enemy reach the line. Crowds of fugitives marched, or rather trudged, with them. When the 2nd Corps reached the position Dour–Quarouble–Frameries they partially entrenched themselves, enabling Haig to withdraw and reach the position Bavai–Maubeuge.

Many wonderful deeds of heroism were performed as the men toiled on. One of the 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards carried a wounded comrade under fire to a farmhouse, where the two held up about a dozen Uhlans, protected only by a barrier of furniture and their rifles. When several of the Germans had been killed or wounded, the remainder ran off and brought a machine-gun. Apparently in the hope of capturing the weapon, the two men rushed out of the house, and were shot dead on the threshold.

Sir Charles Fergusson, commanding the 5th Division, was so hard pressed at Frameries, which he was making

a gallant attempt to hold, that he found it necessary to ask Allenby for support. For a time the onslaught was checked by a gallant charge on the German flank, but the 9th Lancers and 18th Hussars were held up by wire within 500 yards of the enemy, and subjected to a withering fire. Those who escaped sought what little shelter was offered by a house, which was speedily demolished by shells, and they then made their way to the embankment of a light railway. A handful of men dragged into safety a battery of guns which had been abandoned, and eventually reached the British lines.

By nightfall Smith-Dorrien's Corps occupied a position to the west of Bavai, with Haig on his right, protected by the fortress of Maubeuge. The 19th Brigade, between Jenlain and Bry, protected the left wing, while the cavalry were on the outer flank.

The situation remained exceedingly perilous. "The French were still retiring," the Field-Marshal notes in his dispatch, "and I had no support except such as was afforded by the fortress of Maubeuge, and the determined attempts of the enemy to get round my left flank assured me that it was his intention to hem me against that place and surround me. I felt that not a moment must be lost in retiring to another position. I had every reason to believe that the enemy's forces were somewhat exhausted, and I knew that they had suffered heavy losses. I hoped, therefore, that his pursuit would not be too vigorous to prevent me effecting my object. The operation, however, was full of danger and difficulty, not only owing to the very superior force in my front, but also to the exhaustion of the troops." The Corps commanders were therefore told to continue their retreat

toward the line Vermand–Saint-Quentin–Ribemont. Sir John French's determination was to put a substantial obstacle, such as a river, between his troops and the enemy, so that an opportunity could be given for much-needed rest and reorganization. Saint-Quentin, it should be noted, is on the Somme, to the east of Vermand, and Ribemont on the Oise.

The retreat recommenced very early on the morning of the 25th, the 1st Corps covering the retirement of the troops under Smith-Dorrien, whose 5th Division was hard pressed in the neighbourhood of Condé previous to receiving the support of Allenby's cavalry. Satisfied with the progress that Haig was continuing to make, the Commander-in-Chief proceeded to Avesnes, where three divisions of the French Cavalry Corps were in billets. He saw General Sordêt, and earnestly requested his help, but the commander's horses were too tired to move before the following day. In the afternoon of the 25th the 2nd Corps had reached Le Cateau, and several hours later the 1st Corps arrived at Landrecies. Fortunately reinforcements in the shape of Snow's 4th Division had come up during the course of the day, and had rendered effective help. Late in the evening Germans were seen issuing from the forest north of Landrecies, but the 4th Guards Brigade exacted a heavy toll for their temerity when the enemy entered the town. Haig's 1st Division had also a severe tussle south and east of Maroilles. Eventually assistance was given by two French Reserve Divisions, but Sir John French states that it was mainly due to Haig's skill that the 1st Corps was extricated from an exceptionally difficult position during the night.

At daybreak on the 26th Haig's 1st Corps had resumed its march south toward Wessigny-on-Guise, Allenby had concentrated two brigades of cavalry to the south of Cambrai, and Smith-Dorrien's 2nd Corps was facing the guns of no fewer than four enemy corps, which meant that his artillery was outmatched by at least four to one. The General's orders were to continue his retirement, but this he held to be impossible. As the Field-Marshal could give him no reinforcements, he sent word that Sir Horace was "to use his utmost endeavours to break off the action and retire at the earliest possible moment." Smith-Dorrien remained to fight, and the result was almost a disaster.

Before referring to the battle of Le Cateau it may be interesting to read what a member of the German General Staff said with reference to the qualities of the men who fought at Mons and took part in the retreat that was forced upon them through no fault of their own.

"After we had broken through the French positions on the Belgian frontier," he says, "and had got Joffre's army on the move toward the south, the German Army's advance appeared to be checked. It was General French's army that had stayed the retreat. We ordered the English lines to be stormed. Our troops dashed into them with fixed bayonets, but our efforts to drive the English back were in vain. They are very good at resisting a bayonet attack. The English are strong people, athletic, and well developed. So we decided to shoot them down, but we found that they aimed remarkably well. 'Every bullet found its billet,' as they say.

"We ordered our best shots to tackle them, but the result was not in our favour. Then we got all our artillery at work that could be spared against them. We swept the English positions with a rain of shells—a regular bombardment. When the firing ceased we expected to find the English had fled. The English artillery cannot be compared with ours or the French, and we soon silenced it. We had not heard from the English for an hour.

"But how can I describe our astonishment? Beyond the shell-swept zone we saw English soldiers' heads moving, and they began to use their rifles again as soon as the coast was clear. The English *are* a cool lot! We had to assault again and again, but in vain. We were in fact repulsed after having literally surrounded them. Their perseverance and pluck had gained their just reward. The retirement could now be carried out in an orderly way. All risk of catastrophe to the retreating army was averted. Even the sight of the wounded surprised us and commanded our respect. They lay so still and scarcely ever complained."

The decision of Smith-Dorrien to make a stand at Le Cateau was a very grave one. He not only acted contrary to the orders of his superior officer, but deprived him of the possibility of making a stand behind the Somme or the Oise, as he contemplated, and of taking a more important part in the subsequent battle of the Marne and in the preliminary operations on the Aisne. Although warned by Allenby that unless the 2nd Corps continued its retreat at dawn on the 26th there was every likelihood of the troops being surrounded, Sir Horace risked the possibility

of a second Sedan because he was of opinion that they were too tired to march. The Commander-in-Chief's personal observations of the previous evening did not support this contention. Until the complete evidence has passed through the sieve of History it is impossible, of course, to pronounce a verdict. Smith-Dorrien's decision resulted in the loss of 14,000 officers and men and some eighty guns at an extremely critical period.

The superb fighting qualities of the old 'Regulars' alone saved the day. At the very outset part of the 14th Brigade were cut off by the German advanced guard, but they extricated themselves and continued to fight for hours in a position which they took up to the south-east of Le Cateau. In parts of the line there were no trenches, and as a consequence heavy casualties. Confronted by terrific shell-fire, with many of their own batteries out of action, the 5th Division in particular suffered terribly. Of the 2nd Suffolks only about 250 men were left. The 19th Brigade went to the support of the gallant 5th, advancing under an appalling deluge of fire, and remained in the shallow trenches until it was impossible to hold them. Those who were able to do so withdrew to a ridge in the rear and stayed the advance of the enemy for a considerable time. Eventually the German masses proved too strong. The order to retire was given only when the line was in imminent danger of envelopment.

The centre, less exposed to shell-fire, held on grimly enough, but the 4th Division, covering the left flank, was heavily attacked. Four times the British were driven out of the quarry pits in the neighbourhood of Fontaine and Ligny, and four times they recovered them. When these wonderful fighters were com-

pelled to abandon Les Carrières, they fell back upon Ligny, and twice flung their pursuers from them. Some of the batteries fought until there was not a round of ammunition left, and the gunners became spectators instead of participants, though soaked to the skin by rain.

At three o'clock or thereabout it was obvious that retirement alone could save the 2nd Corps from disaster. This was successfully accomplished, aided materially by the cavalry of Allenby, Sordêt, and d'Amade, and what artillery could be brought to bear on the pursuing Germans. No language can adequately describe the mental and physical state of the worn-out troops as they slowly made their way along the Saint-Quentin road in a drenching thunderstorm. Some fell exhausted, all were half asleep. The 1st Gordons somehow took the wrong direction, were entrapped by the enemy, and not a man escaped.

Meanwhile the 1st Corps had been able to continue its retreat, but on the morning of the 27th, owing to a dispatch-rider having been taken prisoner, the Munster Fusiliers did not receive orders to proceed. Their retreat was cut off by superior numbers, and after putting up a fine fight for several hours, those who survived were compelled to surrender or suffer annihilation.

On this and the succeeding day the 2nd Corps continued to retire toward Chaulny and Noyon, while the 1st Corps moved along the line of the Oise in the direction of La Fère, Allenby's cavalry still doing wonders in checking the pursuit, and Sordêt and d'Amade attacking the enemy in and about Péronne. The brilliant attack of the retreating 5th French Army

at Guise on the 29th, when three German army corps were defeated, also afforded substantial help. Joffre, with one eye on Paris and the other on the Germans, was anxious to take the offensive, but the British

The Western Front, 1914

Field-Marshal told him quite plainly that his men were in no condition to fill any portion of a fighting line. On the 30th, Lord French tells us in his valuable *1914*, "the demand that we should stand and fight was not only urgently repeated, but was actually backed by imperative messages from the French President, and from Lord Kitchener and the British Government; yet at this very moment Lanrezac was

actually throwing back the left flank of the 5th Army and widening the gap between us. At the same time Lord Kitchener was assuring the Home Government that our losses were comparatively small, and that all deficiencies had been made good."

Sir John French refused, convinced that the proposition would deliver Paris into the enemy's hands if persisted in. The retreat was continued, and although not severely pressed, rearguard actions were constantly being fought. On the 3rd September the now reunited British Army was south of the Marne between Lagny and Signy-Signets. Joffre then requested French to retire still farther, and on the 5th they were beyond the Seine, in the vicinity of Presles. It was the last day of the Great Retreat, and also of the Great German Advance, and neither the French nor the British line had been broken.

The following is Sir John French's Order of the 6th :

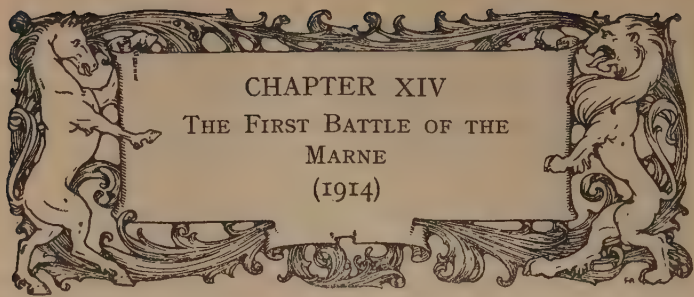
" After a most trying series of operations, mostly in retirement, which have been rendered necessary by the general strategic plan of the Allied armies, the British forces stand to-day formed in line with their French comrades, ready to attack the enemy. Foiled in their attempt to invest Paris, the Germans have been driven to move in an easterly and south-easterly direction, with the apparent intention of falling in strength on the 5th French Army. In this operation they are exposing their right flank and their line of communications to an attack by the combined 6th French Army and the British forces.

" I call upon the British Army in France to show now to the enemy its power, and to push in vigorously to the attack beside the 6th French Army.

"I am sure I shall not call upon them in vain, but that, on the contrary, by another manifestation of the magnificent spirit which they have shown in the past fortnight, they will fall on the enemy's flank with all their strength, and in unison with their Allies drive them back."

The movement of the 1st German Army to its left mentioned in the above, exposing von Kluck's right flank to the British and the 6th French Armies, was necessitated by the withdrawal of many of the troops of von Hausen's 3rd Army for fighting on the Eastern Front against the Russians. This operation was the famous 'swerve' of contemporary newspapers, and was done to close up the gap thus created between von Kluck's and von Bülow's armies.

Joffre reminded his men that there was "but one business on hand—to attack and repel the enemy." Victory had crowned the efforts of the Germans at Mülhausen, Charleroi, Longwy, Dinant, Le Cateau, and Maubeuge. Lille, Arras, Amiens, and Châlons were in their possession. The Russian invasion of East Prussia had resulted in the stupendous disaster of Tannenberg. The French Government had removed to Bordeaux, and patrols of the dreaded Uhlans had reached within twelve miles of Paris. The British having destroyed the bridges after crossing the Marne, the enemy had made bridges of boats. The pursuit had doubtless exhausted the enemy to no small extent, but success is a powerful stimulant, and the fall of the City on the Seine was deemed a certainty.



CHAPTER XIV

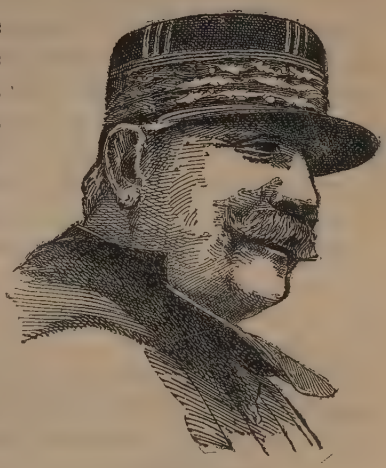
The First Battle of the Marne (1914)

THE first battle of the Marne is one of the decisive battles of the world. Joffre's orders were that on the 6th September the whole Allied line should advance and attack with vigour von Kluck's 1st Army and von Bülow's 2nd Army. For seven days probably over 2,000,000 men were engaged in the titanic struggle. The intention of the Generalissimo, Lord French tells us, was "to inflict a crushing defeat on the whole German army on our front by assailing its flanks with the 6th French and British Armies, attacking from a line running roughly from Les Plessis–Belleville on the north through Cuisy–Iverny–Neufmontiers–Meaux, across the Marne to Villers-sur-Morin–Rozoy–La Chapelle Iger to Gastins on the south. At the same time the 5th French Army was to advance north from its present position and, with all the French armies to its right, Franchet d'Espérey was to make a simultaneous frontal attack."

Opposite Dubail's 1st and Castelnau's 2nd French Armies were the 7th and 6th Armies of von Heeringen and the Crown Prince of Bavaria respectively, Sarrail's 3rd French Army faced the Crown Prince's 5th Army,

de Langle's 4th French Army the Prince of Würtemberg's 4th Army, Foch's 9th French Army von Bülow's 2nd Army, d'Espérey's 5th and Maunoury's 6th French Armies von Kluck's 1st Army.

The conflict began, and at noon it was evident that the advance of the 6th French Army had made von Kluck realize the serious danger to the flank of his columns moving south-east. He had already started on the Great German Retreat, although it was not until the 10th that Maunoury, reinforced by 20,000 men sent up the line from Paris in taxicabs and any other vehicles available, had the satisfaction of knowing that the issue of the desperate fighting had definitely set in his favour. The British, with some of their losses in *matériel* and men made good, had a comparatively easy time. There is reason to suppose that von Kluck thought the British exhausted by their retirement from Mons, which they might well have been, and that Maunoury's force was considerably weaker than it proved to be.



Marshal Joffre

Advancing with the 2nd Corps in the centre, the 4th Division on the left, and the 1st Corps on the right, the British made steady progress: but toward the east

d'Espérey and Foch were meeting with strong resistance, and de Langle had exceedingly difficult work to prevent the 4th German Army from piercing the Allied centre. So great was the pressure exerted on Sarrail by the Crown Prince's 5th Army that he was forced to give ground.

On the 7th the British continued their advance to the north, Sir John French's orders being that the Grand Morin River was to be forced and passed that day. This was done, the cavalry displaying marked activity, particularly the 18th Hussars and the 9th Lancers. On the right d'Espérey's 5th Army was fighting stubbornly, and gradually pushing the Germans to the line of the Petit-Morin; Maunoury was confronted by almost the full strength of von Kluck's 1st Army; and Foch was holding on like grim death against von Bülow.

Haig forced the Petit-Morin on the morning of the following day, and after enemy troops had been cleared out of the woods to the north excellent progress was made. The latter statement also applied to Pulteney's 3rd Corps (4th Division and the 19th Brigade). Smith-Dorrien's 2nd Corps met with a stiffer resistance at the hands of the German rearguards, but inflicted severe loss on the enemy in killed, wounded, and prisoners. The work accomplished on the 8th materially assisted the French.

Although the 1st and 2nd Corps had advanced several miles to the north of the Marne by the night of the 9th, the passage of the river by the 3rd Corps at La Ferté was delayed until the following dawn, owing to the destruction of the bridge and the holding of the town by the retiring forces. On this critical

day of the 9th the enemy, although strengthened, was nowhere successful. West of the Ourcq the men of the 6th French Army fought like fiends, and the 5th French Army flung the Germans north of the river and established themselves in the neighbourhood of Château Thierry after heavy fighting at Montmirail. "Held on his flanks, his centre broken, the enemy is now retreating toward east and north by forced marches. The most renowned army corps of Old Prussia, the contingents of Westphalia, of Hanover, of Brandenburg, have retired in haste before you." So d'Espérey told his troops, adding that "the enemy is shaken, but not yet decisively beaten." Even more important was the blow struck in the centre by Foch with his 42nd Division on the flank of the German Guards, followed immediately by an assault that broke the line and successfully drove in a wedge between von Bülow and the Saxons under von Hausen. When Foch, with the instinct of genius, saw that the moment had come for abandoning the defensive and taking the offensive, and having arrived at that decision carried it through, the battle was won. Yet it is said on credible authority that earlier in the day, when his 9th and 11th Corps had been compelled to retire because of the sheer weight of the oncoming hordes, and the whole line to withdraw, he had reported to Joffre, "My centre yielding, my right retreating, excellent situation, I am attacking." He had temporarily withdrawn the 42nd Division, whose fighting qualities he had already proved, to another part of the field. Not a *poilu* understood why; few deemed it other than a stroke of madness. The gallant 42nd was the arrow of the General's bow, and

when it was launched in the early evening it struck home with deadly decision, to the utter consternation of the amazed enemy.

Still opposed by strong rearguards, the British continued to go ahead on the 10th. They drove the Germans northward like a herd of cattle. The enemy left many dead, in addition to some 2000 prisoners and a quantity of transport. Thirteen guns and seven machine-guns fell into the hands of the 'Contemptibles.' "This evening," Sir John French says in his dispatch, "marks the end of the battle."

The drive was continued on the 11th, the British line in the evening extending from Oulchy-le-Château to Long Pont, north of the Ourcq. On the following day the Germans put the Aisne between themselves and their pursuers, whose passage it was very evident they were determined to resist to the utmost. The battle of the Marne was not the crushing defeat that Sir John French had asked for, but it was a magnificent victory for the Allies.

Sheltered by the sea and the Navy, England, on which no combatant Hun set his foot save to be captured, never realized the horror of the conflict. This is how it came home to Mr Philip Gibbs, perhaps the ablest correspondent on the Western Front:

"The retreat of the Germans to the Marne, when those columns of men turned their backs on Paris and trudged back along many roads down which they had come with songs of victory and across stony fields strewn already with the *débris* of fighting, on through villages where they burned and looted as they passed, left a trail of muck and blood and ruin. Five

weeks before, when I had travelled through part of the countryside from the eastern frontier of France, the spirit of beauty dwelt in it. . . .

"Now, along the line of the retreat, nature itself was fouled and the old dwelling-places of peace were wrecked. Fighting their way back the enemy had burned many villages, or had defended them against a withering fire from the pursuing troops, so that their blackened stumps of timber, and charred, broken walls, with heaps of ashes which were once farm-houses and barns, remained as witnesses of the horror that had passed. Along the roadways were the bodies of dead horses. Swarms of flies were black upon them, browsing on their putrefying flesh, from which a stench came poisoning the air and rising above the scent of flowers and the sweet smell of hay in eddying waves of abominable odour."

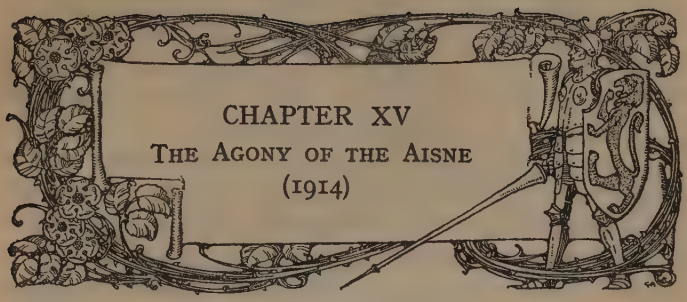
This was merely the aftermath of war. No Verestchagin of the pen has adequately described the clash of the titanic conflict itself.

Joffre had done more than stay the avalanche of blood and iron that was to overwhelm the capital of France, more than merely oppose a defence supported by the fortifications of Paris, Lorraine, and Verdun; he had implanted in the mind of the invader the possibility of defeat. Previous to the battle of the Marne the German Army had entertained no thoughts other than those of its invincibility. Joffre had done yet more; he had won the entire confidence of the Allied armies.

Just before the Marne Joffre had singled out Maunoury and Foch for the newly created 6th and 9th Armies, and had retired others lacking in energy or

initiative. "*Mes braves petits soldats,*" said the Generalissimo; "*Père Joffre,*" was their response.

Criticism of the slow advance of the British Army and of the smaller part played by the cavalry than was expected has been made. With regard to the former, it must be remembered that in the retreat from Mons the pursuit of the enemy had been very vigorous, and that no sooner was that over than the men were ordered to take the offensive. From the 23rd August up to the 17th September they were without rest of any kind. As regards the latter criticism, perhaps it is sufficient to say that the Field-Marshal's dispatches contain many references to the cavalry. It "acted with great vigour," it "much assisted" in forcing the Petit-Morin, and so on. A brilliant leader of horse-soldiers, Sir John French was scarcely likely to lose a chance of using that arm when opportunity was afforded him to do so.



CHAPTER XV

The Agony of the Aisne (1914)

WHEN the Germans crossed the Aisne the Allies were unaware that entrenched positions had already been prepared by them previous to their attempt to march on Paris. The enemy was thus able to resist the heavy attacks made on him by the French and British from the 13th to the 18th September. The British, holding a line of about fifteen miles, had on their right the 5th and 7th French Armies, and the 6th French Army on their left. One bridge alone was available, for the Germans had rendered all the others unusable. It says much for the wonderful energy of the Engineers that within a few hours five of the broken structures had been repaired sufficiently to allow of the passage of men and supplies, while nine temporary bridges had been constructed and brought into service. All the while the men were working under shell-fire. Fortunately the weather was misty, or the execution of the enemy's guns might have been more deadly. At the same time, of course, the low visibility similarly handicapped the British artillery.

When Haig's 1st Corps had crossed they found the Germans in formidable numbers on the old highway

called the Chemin-des-Dames, near which was an abandoned sugar refinery held by them and defended in the rear by two batteries. The building, after stiff opposition, was carried at the point of the bayonet. The men at the guns were killed, but unhappily the guns could not be captured, and the refinery had to be abandoned on account of the heavy fire of the opposing force, which regained what remained of both artillery and factory. Faced by the fury of the guns, but paying the advancing enemy in their own coin, another body of troops advanced as far as possible and then dug themselves in. Time after time the Germans endeavoured to break through at weak spots, but always they were prevented. Some of the divisions made a slight advance, but others were held up and had difficulty in maintaining their ground.

The heavy howitzers which had brought about the fall of Maubeuge were now in position; attack followed attack, repulse followed repulse, but the Germans failed to make appreciable progress. The arrival of the 6th Division, completing Pulteney's 3rd Corps, was very opportune, for no fewer than 10,000 casualties had occurred during the six days of the battle. When it became obvious that the Allied idea of frontal attack was impracticable, the British and French began the long and weary months of trench warfare, broken from time to time by raids, attacks, and counter-attacks. In due course heavy artillery was available for the British, but the supply of ammunition was lamentably short of the demand. For every ten German shells fired the French and British could only return one.

"This trench life is weird work," an officer wrote

The Battle of the Aisne : A British Sap-head at Dawn
Frederick Villiers

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to the *Times*; "we snipe away at Germans at 1200 yards and they snipe us; then the guns on either side have a set-to; then their guns give us a doing in the trenches; then a bit of high bird shooting at aeroplanes, usually done by us officers. It is very dangerous to our friends. Our air guns only shoot a projectile that bursts on graze, so we cannot see where our shells go; but the Deutschers fire their field guns. . . . We've dug everywhere into this hill—trenches for this, trenches for that, caves on the hillside—every man delves his place of safety into Mother Earth, and into it he grovels when the shells arrive."

By extending his line to the west Joffre sought to outflank the German right, a plan prevented by the German occupation of La Bassée and Lille. A desperate race to reach the North Sea now ensued, the enemy anxious to reach Calais so as to cut the sea communication between England and France, and the Allies equally determined that the Channel ports must be held at all costs. Foch, who had driven von Bülow from Rheims across the Suippe but could not prevent him from recrossing and bombarding the magnificent cathedral, was now given command of the French Northern Army Group.

Sir John French, knowing that the fall of Antwerp was extremely probable, and apprehensive of the safety of the coast, requested that the British Army should be shifted from the Aisne front to the left of the French. This was skilfully done without the knowledge of the opposing forces. On the 9th October Antwerp fell to the enemy, and many men of the two British Naval Brigades, badly equipped and only half trained, which had been sent "as part of a large

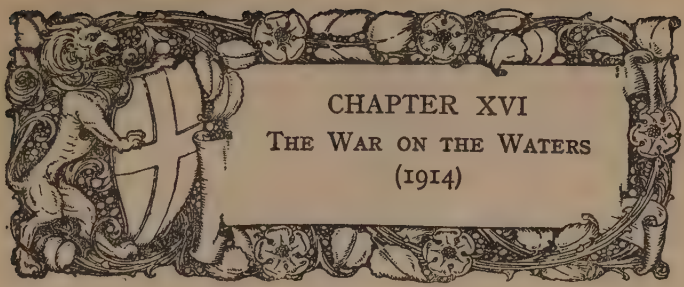
operation for the relief of the city," mistook their way and were interned in Holland. Whatever the "large operation" may have been, it failed to mature. The brave little Belgian Army, pushed back but still undefeated, clung to a little bit of Belgium throughout the war. In their retreat valuable assistance was rendered by the recently arrived 7th Division and 3rd Cavalry Division, part of Rawlinson's 4th Corps.

From the 11th October until the last day of the month terrific fighting took place in the La Bassée-Armentières region, while at Ypres, a little farther to the north, an attempt was made to push back the enemy toward Ghent. The marvellous fighting spirit of Haig's men, led by a skilful commander, alone saved the British from disaster. Instead of gaining ground they lost it, but they held Ypres, the key of the position. In that salient three divisions and some cavalry fought five army corps. "It was left to a little force of 30,000 men," says Sir Henry Rawlinson, "to keep the German army at bay while the other British corps were being brought up from the Aisne. Here they clung on like grim death, with almost every man in the trenches, holding a line which of necessity was a great deal too long—a thin, exhausted line—against which the prime of the German first-line troops were hurling themselves with fury. The odds against them were about eight to one; and, when once the enemy found the range of a trench, the shells dropped into it from one end to the other with terrible effect. Yet the men stood firm, and defended Ypres in such a manner that a German officer afterward described their action as a brilliant feat of arms, and said that they were under the impression that there had been

four British army corps against them at this point. When the division was afterward withdrawn from the firing line to refit, it was found that out of 400 officers who set out from England there were only forty-four left, and out of 12,000 men only 2336." It has been estimated that the casualties of the Allied forces in the line Albert–Nieuport numbered over 100,000, and the German losses at no fewer than a quarter of a million. The battle of Ypres, which barred the way to Calais, may be said to have ended on the 17th, with the repulse of the 15th German Corps and the relief of the British in the snow-bound trenches by the French. On the 14th Lord Roberts, anxious to see his beloved Indians in the field, had died "within sound of the guns."

As a result of the struggle in 1914 Germany secured the cities of Belgium, but the short and sharp campaign that was to win her Paris and Calais before autumn, and Warsaw before winter, had failed. At the end of the year the Allied line held the Germans in check from Switzerland to the North Sea; Hindenburg was in a difficult position in Poland; Austria had added a long series of defeats to her disastrous military history. The Allies had gained no new adherent to their number, but the neutrals, though waxing rich in supplying the enemy with goods owing to the laxity of the blockade, were certainly not enamoured of Germany's methods of waging war. The Central Empires had secured a confederate in Turkey, whose entry into the war added considerably to the problems of winning it. A blow at the Suez Canal was probable, and for this Major-General Sir John Maxwell was ready.

Following the rout of an Austrian force of some 60,000 troops on the Drina River, which separates Serbia from Bosnia, and a further victory at Matshwa, the Serbians and Montenegrins invaded Bosnia. They also penetrated into Slavonia, but the reinforcement of the enemy in the west compelled the soldiers of the gallant little Balkan allies to withdraw on that front. They had, however, penetrated into Hungary in the direction of Semlin, on the opposite side of the Save to Belgrade.



CHAPTER XVI
The War on the Waters
(1914)

NAVAL warfare did not start with a battle of the giants, as some anticipated. The enemy played a waiting game, hoping to wear down the British Navy by the promiscuous use of mines and the development of the submarine. On the 5th August, after a chase of about thirty miles by the light cruiser *Amphion* and destroyers, the *Königin Luise*, a passenger steamer converted into a mine-layer, was sunk in the North Sea. A few hours later the *Amphion* struck one of the devices sown by her victim and joined her in the realm of the underseas.

Appropriately enough, Captain C. H. Fox, the commander of the flotilla, avenged the loss of his ship on the 17th of the following October, when he sank four German destroyers in a brilliant action which only cost five casualties. As a result of the murderous menace of the mine in the trade routes, the North Sea was proclaimed a military area on the 3rd November.

The first engagement of consequence took place on the 28th August, when a reconnaissance in force resulted in the battle of Heligoland Bight. In order to entice the enemy into the open, submarines were

used as decoys. These craft had already proved their usefulness by keeping close watch on the enemy's coast during the crossing of the Expeditionary Force to France, when the High Sea Fleet might reasonably have attempted an attack.

In due course two cruisers and several destroyers came out to catch such easy prey, but there emerged from the mist the British light cruisers *Arethusa* and *Fearless*, accompanied by the First and Third Destroyer Flotillas under the command of Commodore Reginald Tyrwhitt. For over an hour and a quarter the *Arethusa* received a heavy fire from two large cruisers. One of the latter then turned her attention to the *Fearless*, but within ten minutes the *Arethusa's* antagonist was making off as best she could with a wrecked fore-bridge. Only one gun on the British ship then remained in action. When the temporary disablement of the *Arethusa* had been remedied she was again in the thick of the fight. With others she attacked the *Mainz*, which was set on fire, and eventually sunk by two vessels of the Light Cruiser Squadron under Goodenough. The *Köln* also received rough handling, and was sent to the bottom by Admiral Sir David Beatty's flagship, the *Lion*, which had now come on the scene with other giants of the First Battle-Cruiser Squadron. A third enemy cruiser, the *Ariadne*, disappeared in the mist in a sinking condition. No British ships were lost, although several destroyers were badly damaged. Two German destroyers were observed to sink, and others were severely punished. About 300 prisoners were rescued, including the son of Grand Admiral von Tirpitz. The total British casualties numbered sixty-nine killed and wounded.

On the 9th August H.M.S. *Birmingham* sank the first U-boat, and on the 13th September Submarine E 9 torpedoed the cruiser *Hela*, a performance repeated on the 7th October by the sinking of the torpedo-boat S 126 off the estuary of the Ems, near the powerfully fortified island of Borkum. These brilliant exploits of Lieut.-Commander Max K. Horton were more than counterbalanced by the disaster which befell the obsolescent armoured cruisers *Aboukir*, *Hogue*, and *Cressy* on the 22nd September. While patrolling in company in the North Sea at reduced speed they were torpedoed in turn within an hour by U 9. This triple tragedy resulted in a death-roll of 60 officers and over 1400 men, more than the total British losses at the battles of the Glorious First of June, St Vincent, the Nile, and Trafalgar. Other ships sunk by U-boats in 1914 included the light cruiser *Pathfinder*, the cruiser *Hawke*, the seaplane-carrier *Hermes*, the torpedo gunboat *Niger*, and the coast-defence vessel *Hela*. Submarine E 3 was also lost.

Had there been more targets for British ships, there would doubtless have been a higher rate of mortality in German vessels. During 1914 the High Sea Fleet took good care not to challenge Britain's sea-power in a battle. It put forth no effort to safeguard German commerce. Considerably over 1,000,000 tons of German shipping were captured, and most of the vessels which escaped did so by seeking refuge in neutral ports.

In far-distant waters several cruisers did considerable damage before they were rounded up. There were, for instance, the five cruisers of Admiral von

Spee's Pacific Squadron, the *Scharnhorst, Gneisenau, Leipzig, Dresden,* and *Nürnberg.* To oppose them was a much weaker force under Sir Christopher Cradock, whose flagship the *Good Hope* had as consorts the *Monmouth,* the *Glasgow,* and the *Otranto,* a liner converted into an auxiliary cruiser. So great was the disparity in armament, should they happen to meet, that the British Admiral's chances of victory were more than four to one against him. The *Canopus,* a slow-going and almost obsolete battleship, had been sent to reinforce him. When the two squadrons met off Coronel, Chile, on the 1st November this vessel had not arrived.

Cradock, a typical sea-dog, accepted battle. Outmanœuvred, with his inferior ships silhouetted against the after-glow of the setting sun, and in a heavy sea, the Admiral opened fire. The *Otranto* had no chance whatever in such a fight and could have rendered very little assistance, so he signalled her to leave the firing line. He fought to a finish, and that finish was death. Both the *Good Hope* and the *Monmouth* took fire early in the action, but the guns were fed and fought until they disappeared with the ships and their gallant crews. On that cheerless November evening over 1650 men went to their watery graves. Not a soul was saved. The auxiliary cruiser and the *Glasgow* escaped, the latter to fight another day.

That other day was not long in coming. Lord Fisher, who had succeeded Prince Louis of Battenberg as First Sea Lord, hastily despatched two battle-cruisers, a battleship, three armoured cruisers, two light cruisers, and an armed liner to exact a reckoning. All unsuspecting, von Spee came in sight of this

Men of the "Sydney" cheering as the "Emden" sank
C. M. Padday

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formidable armada as it waited in the harbours of Port William and Port Stanley, in the Falkland Islands. On the 8th December, in the South Atlantic, thousands of miles from the main theatre, Sir Frederick Sturdee achieved the greatest naval victory of the war. The *Dresden* alone escaped, and she surrendered to the *Glasgow*, the *Kent*, and the auxiliary cruiser *Orama* near Juan Fernandez Island—associated with Robinson Crusoe—on 14th March, 1915.

The exploits of Surcouf in the Indian seas were rivalled by Captain Müller of the *Emden*. This famous light cruiser of 3650 tons escaped from Tsing-tau, the seaport of the German settlement of Kiao-Chau, on the 6th August, and claimed twenty-three victims during her raiding operations. For three months she played havoc with shipping in the East, coaling herself from captured vessels, tapping wireless messages, and having a gay time generally while her adventurous career lasted. British, Australian, French, Russian, and Japanese men-of-war hunted her, yet the *Emden's* depredations continued. With amazing audacity Müller shelled Madras and Pondicherry, and dashed into Penang harbour and sank a Russian armoured cruiser. He was finally cornered and his ship destroyed off Cocos Keeling Island, in the Indian Ocean, by the Australian light cruiser *Sydney*, commanded by Captain J. C. T. Glossop, on the 9th November.

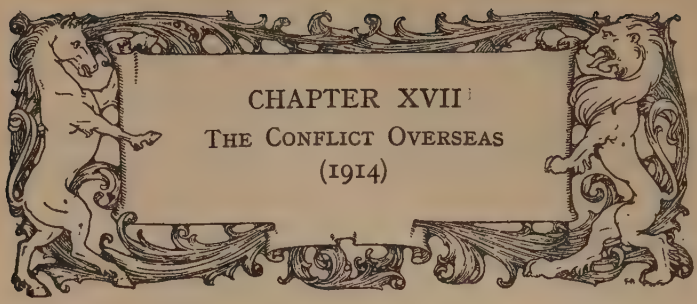
Another successful raider for a time was the *Karlsruhe*, which worked in the Atlantic, while the *Königsberg* operated off the coast of East Africa. When the light cruiser *Pegasus* was being repaired in Zanzibar harbour, the *Königsberg* appeared and battered her

almost to pieces. A few weeks later the raider sought a hiding-place in the Rufiji River, where she was blocked to await the arrival of monitors. The latter obtained the range by signal from aircraft, and succeeded in putting the cruiser completely out of action, though they found the task by no means an easy one.

At the mouth of the River Plate the auxiliary cruiser *Orama* encountered the converted Hamburg-Amerika liner *Navarra* and sank her. Almost three years later the victor was submarined. Another duel fought by merchantmen turned men-of-war was that between the Cunarder *Carmania* and the *Cap Trafalgar* off the east coast of South America. Skilful handling and the quality of the firing rather than weight of metal turned the scale in favour of the *Carmania*, though she was hit eighty times in the course of an hour and forty minutes. There were thirty-five casualties on the British ship, and 279 German officers and men were rescued by a collier and landed at Buenos Aires.

At the outbreak of war two destroyer-leaders constructed in England for the Chilian Government were purchased and renamed *Faulkner* and *Broke*, three monitors were bought from Brazil, and two Dreadnoughts were taken over from Turkey and christened *Agincourt* and *Erin* respectively. The last transaction had a part in the influences which brought Turkey into the war. The Turks particularly resented the vessels being taken. Meanwhile the German light cruiser *Breslau*, and the *Goeben*, the fastest battle-cruiser in the Imperial Navy, had made their way through the Dardanelles to the Golden Horn.

The escape of these two powerful German vessels from Messina Straits was made the subject of an inquiry by a naval court, and Rear-Admiral E. C. T. Troubridge, commander of the First Cruiser Squadron in the Mediterranean, was fully and honourably acquitted of blame. The British Admiralty quite naturally believed that the *Breslau* and *Goeben* would be dismantled and interned in accordance with international law. This was not done, and after protracted negotiations Great Britain declared war. The ill-considered bombardment of the Dardanelles by a combined British and French squadron was begun on the 3rd November, but no military operation was undertaken. This preliminary announcement of the intentions of the Allies put Turkey on the *qui vive*, and induced her to make preparations against further operations.



CHAPTER XVII

The Conflict Overseas (1914)

IT was no cause for surprise that the first German colony to fall was Togoland, on the west coast of Africa. Hedged in on three sides by French and British possessions, and open to the Gulf of Guinea on the other, this thickly populated and fertile territory fell easy prey to the naval and military forces sent to subdue it. Before the end of the first month of the war Togoland had fallen to the Allies. Germany regarded it as her model colony, for it was the only one run without annual subsidies. Its chief products are rubber and oil fruits.

Cameroon, bounded on the north by Nigeria, on the east and south by French territory, and on the west by the Bight of Biafra, save only for the little Spanish holding of Rio Muni, was almost equally well placed strategically for the purpose of invasion, but its vaster area made campaigning considerably more difficult. A detachment of the West African Frontier Force, after meeting with initial success, was driven back by a heavy counter-attack. Two other columns also started well, but the same tactics were pursued by the enemy, with the result that all three expeditions were compelled to withdraw to

Nigeria. Better fortune attended a combined attack on the port of Duala, off which the *Cumberland* and the *Dwarf* were stationed. It surrendered, as did Bonaberi, also on the coast, and the railway terminus of Japoma. In a raid up the Cameroon River the *Cumberland* captured the river gunboat *Soden*, and several small German merchantmen in good condition, most of them well laden with cargoes. To the south the coast town of Ukoko fell to the French. At the end of the year the situation had brightened so much that the surrender of the colony was only a question of time. The Germans and their native auxiliaries were everywhere on the defensive, the railways had been seized, the wireless stations destroyed, and the coast secured.

German South-West Africa, which might have been British but for our supineness, had as its northern frontier Portuguese Angola, on the east Bechuanaland, on the south Cape Colony, and on the west the Atlantic. One little portion of it remained British, namely, Walfish Bay, together with the territory round it for a radius of fifteen miles. This was the chief harbour of a country covering 322,450 square miles, principally made up of huge farms. It was the most European of the German African colonies, there being about one white man to every five natives. While its proximity to the South African Union made British penetration easy, it had also aided in the dissemination of German political propaganda before the war. South-West Africa was the home of intrigue, where men plotted the downfall of British rule on the great continent, and from whence agents were dispatched to stir up strife among the small section of Boers who still

regarded England with hatred. What railways there were had been built for strategic purposes rather than for commercial reasons, like certain German lines in the vicinity of Belgium and Northern France.

In the Union Parliament a few members, led by General Hertzog, voiced the opinion that South Africa should remain neutral. This objection was in keeping with the General's trend of thought previous to the outbreak of hostilities, and was doubtless influenced by strong personal differences between Botha and himself. General Louis Botha, one of our most skilful antagonists during the Boer War and then Premier, held that with the forces at his command the Union could defend its own territory, and when the Homeland suggested offensive action his Government willingly acquiesced. General C. F. Beyers resigned the supreme command, and Botha at once assumed it. Mr Cresswell, the Labour leader, also set an excellent example by volunteering for active service. General J. C. Smuts commanded in the southern field of operations.

The campaign in South-West Africa opened with the occupation of Lüderitzbucht on the 19th September, but a force which sought to penetrate from the south met with disaster at Sandfontein. Walfish Bay, occupied by the Germans, was re-entered by Colonel Skinner's troops on Christmas Day. With the object of raising the red flag of rebellion, British territory was invaded in several places, and hard fighting took place along the Orange River. The principal conspirators were Beyers, de Wet, Maritz, and Kemp. In one of his proclamations Maritz said his reasons for taking up arms were that "both

the English Government and the jingo section in England have continually brought pressure to bear on the Union Government, contrary to promises made, to extinguish and suppress the national aspirations of our people and to place the interests of the Empire above those of South Africa."

Maritz, suspected of being in league with the Germans, was relieved of his command in the N.W. Cape Province, and immediately joined the enemy. Beyers led an outbreak in the Transvaal, de Wet in the Orange Free State. At Kakamas Maritz was completely defeated on the 26th October, but managed to effect his escape into German territory, although wounded. In less than three weeks the disaffection of Maritz had been dealt with.

On the 23rd October rebellion broke out in the Orange Free State, and in the Transvaal on the following day. Pardon was promised to those who surrendered immediately, and orders were issued that the troops were not to shoot at insurgents unless they were fired on first. These conciliatory methods rather encouraged the rebels than otherwise; like their friends the Germans, they regarded benevolence as weakness. Botha met Beyers at Commissie Drift, but the commando made good their retreat. They reappeared at Katbosfontein, where a kind of armistice was arranged, but before Beyers received a reply to his proposed terms he had traversed some twenty-five miles to Kingswood. Early in November more than a third of his force was captured, and a month later Beyers himself was drowned while attempting to swim the Vaal. De Wet, after an exciting chase, surrendered at Waterburg on the 1st December.

With British East Africa on the north, Portuguese East Africa on the south, Uganda, the Belgian Congo, Northern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland on the west, and the Indian Ocean, with a number of excellent harbours, on the east, German East Africa was the largest of Germany's colonies. Here the campaign opened with a naval bombardment of Dar-es-Salaam, the seat of the Government and an important port, on the 8th August, while the initial military operation was undertaken by the enemy under Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck, who invaded British East Africa. From Taveta, which the Germans captured, they raided sections of the Uganda Railway. Encouraged by their success, they made a strenuous attempt to secure Mombasa and Nairobi, the capital, but they were routed at Gazi on the 8th October, and forced to retire to the frontier, leaving a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition behind them. Much hard fighting also took place in the region of the Tsavo River.

An attack by troops from India on Tanga, the port of Usambara, ended in failure, and the forces were re-embarked and proceeded to Mombasa to assist in the defence of the British East African Protectorate. Failure also attended an attempt on the position taken up by the enemy to the north of Kilimanjaro. By the end of the year, however, British East Africa had been cleared of the Germans, but operations on an extensive scale were precluded pending the arrival of reinforcements.

Securing without difficulty the control of Lake Tanganyika, the enemy were less fortunate in their attack on the Nyasaland port of Karonga, on Lake Nyasa. They were compelled to retreat in disorder

toward their own frontier after a two hours' fight. In the bush of the Victoria Nyanza district much promiscuous fighting took place, the scarcity of cartridges being responsible for the withdrawal of the King's African Rifles at Kisii after an attack lasting over eight hours. At the same time the Germans also fell back, apparently in worse plight than the British, for they abandoned several Maxim guns and a supply of ammunition.

The conquest of Germany's Pacific colonies gave little trouble. Australian and New Zealand expeditions, escorted by ships of the Australian, British, and French Navies, speedily dealt with these enemy possessions. Samoa surrendered without offering resistance on the 28th August, and the island from which Great Britain had withdrawn in 1900 again acknowledged the Union Jack. After an encounter in the bush, a naval landing party secured Neu Pommern, the largest island in the Bismarck Archipelago, on the 11th September. Bougainville, one of the Solomon group, was surrendered two days later, and Wilhelmshaven, in German New Guinea, was occupied without resistance in the same month. The Marshall, Caroline, and Marianne Islands were taken by Japan. By the end of the year Germany's territory in that part of the world had been blotted from the map of her empire.

In a dispatch sent to the President of the Reichstag by the Kaiser, in reply to a telegram of condolence on the fall of Tsingtau, the capital of Kiao-Chau, he made the following comment. It shows how deeply he felt the loss of Germany's only colony in China:

"Tsingtau was a model embodiment of German

culture in these distant seas. It had cost many years of labour. Its heroic defence is a new and sublime example of that spirit of sacrifice, even unto death, of which the German nation, its army, and its fleet have given so many proofs in the defensive war they are waging to-day against a world of hatred, envy, and greed—a war which, God willing, will not be in vain."

The capture of Tsingtau was a difficult operation undertaken by a combined Japanese and British force, Japan finding the larger proportion of troops. The fortress was well garrisoned and mounted heavy guns, and the harbour and approaches had been so heavily mined that it took a considerable time to clear them. Germany had at least 3500 trained men for immediate service, and made excellent use of a small army of natives to strengthen the already formidable defences.

When the British arrived, the Japanese under Lieut.-General Kamio had already landed on the peninsula and started preliminary operations. The 2nd Battalion of the South Wales Borderers and the 36th Sikhs disembarked on the 23rd September. After the strain of heavy marching, oftentimes in torrential rain and half-way up to the knees in liquid mud, the investment was begun. Following the capture of Prince Heinrich Hill, the bombardment of Tsingtau was carried out with great spirit, the forts and redoubts suffering severely, as well as various oil-tanks and coal-stores in the neighbourhood of the dockyard. The bombardment was continued from land and sea with very few intervals until the place surrendered.

The line gradually advanced, though on one occasion

Brigadier-General N. W. Barnardiston was compelled to tell the Japanese Commander-in-Chief that part of the position held by the British was untenable for permanent occupation, because it was enfiladed on both flanks. Kamio's reply was characteristic: "It is necessary for it to be held in order to fit in with the general scheme of assault." On the morning of the 7th November the Allies were preparing for a final advance when the enemy showed a white flag. Tsingtau, "a model embodiment of German culture," had surrendered.

Germany, which had been carefully 'nursing' Turkey for years, was full of optimism regarding her entry into the war. Not only would she be useful for fighting Russia, but there seemed an excellent opportunity for the declaration of a *jihad*, or Holy War, because the Sultan was the head of the Mohammedans. India and Egypt would flame into rebellion, and France would have additional anxiety from the same cause in Morocco and Algeria. Moreover, there was the far-reaching scheme of the Baghdad Railway, which was to strike at Egypt and menace India. Dr Paul Rohrbach frankly confessed that the line, "from the beginning, was intended to unite directly Constantinople and the military strong points of the Turkish Empire in Asia Minor with Syria and the provinces of the Euphrates and Tigris. . . . The Baghdad Railway is thus in the nature of a political life insurance policy for Germany."

The likelihood of an attack in the Persian Gulf had been foreseen by the Government of India before the outbreak of hostilities with Turkey. Apart from its strategic importance, Britain had special interests in

the pipe-line of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, which supplied the Navy with a considerable quantity of fuel. When the Poona Brigade under Brigadier-General W. S. Delamain reached the muddy Shat-el-Arab early in November 1914, the little fort of Fao was shelled by the gunboat *Odin* and the armed launch *Sirdar* preliminary to the landing of the force. Following the occupation of the village, the majority of the troops were re-embarked for Sanijeh, on the Turkish side of the river, and proceeded with the wearisome but necessary business of making an entrenched camp. Before reinforcements had arrived the enemy attacked, were defeated, and turned out of a neighbouring village by the Punjabis and Mahrattas.

Following the coming of additional troops with Lieut.-General Sir Arthur Barrett, the Turkish garrison at Basra was met holding an entrenched position at Sahil, their guns for the most part screened in a date-grove. Across heavy, open ground the British and Indian infantry advanced with the utmost coolness, the artillery occasionally having to be helped out of the sticky mud. Aided by two gunboats, the men pushed on, but before they had an opportunity of teaching the Turks the value of cold steel the trenches were hastily vacated. The fleeing army, pursued as far as was practicable, were in no condition to defend Basra, which was evacuated. The celebrated city associated with Sindbad was entered on the 23rd November. Kurna, at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates, and nearly fifty miles north of Basra, surrendered unconditionally in December, after heavy shelling and a goodly number of casualties on the part of the attacking force.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Western Front in 1915

THE figures of the British Regular Army at the beginning of 1914 look respectable until they are compared with the statistics of the population. There were 444,431 officers and men to defend over 434,000,000 people. Of these fighting forces 156,110 were on Home and Colonial establishments, and 78,476 on the Indian establishment. At Kitchener's immediate disposal there were only 136,000 regulars in the British Isles, including non-combatants. In addition there were the Army Reserve of 146,756, the Special Reserve of 63,089, a National Reserve of 217,680 time-expired men, and the Territorial Force of 251,706 (over 50,000 short of its peace establishment).

Remembering these facts, and granting that Britain would see the matter through, it was no prompting of genius on Kitchener's part that led him to suggest the likelihood of a three years' war. It was fairly obvious that "the spearhead of the British Army," as Lord Haldane termed the Expeditionary Force, could scarcely hope to do more than strike the first blows. Yet even the Field-Marshal failed adequately to appreciate the stinging power of the nettle we had

grasped, for in his first appeal for 100,000 men he made it evident that, while Territorials could offer themselves for foreign service, he did not wish those who had important ties at home to be induced to do so.

The magic of Kitchener's name worked wonders. Men between the ages of 18 and 30 flocked to the colours, and when a second 100,000 was asked for, the age-limit for civilians was extended to 35. Up to the 9th September, 1914, no fewer than 439,000 men had joined the Army, exclusive of the Territorial Force. In other words, the regulars had been nearly doubled. In the middle of November Mr Lloyd George announced in the House of Commons that at least 2,000,000 men were serving the country under arms, and Kitchener stated that recruits were coming in at the rate of approximately 30,000 a week. It was a wonderful beginning, but subsequent measures proved more amazing.

Men, money, and produce were offered enthusiastically throughout the Empire. Australia and Canada immediately volunteered expeditionary forces; New Zealand announced her intention of dispatching three brigades and 200 Maoris; Newfoundland was ready with 500 soldiers, and raised its naval reserve to 3000 men; and, as we have seen, both the Union of South Africa and India were early in the field. There was no sign of the disintegration of the British Empire such as Germany had professed to believe would happen.

To furnish the sinews of war a vote of credit for £100,000,000 was carried without a dissentient voice, a moratorium was proclaimed, the railways were taken over by the Government, a whole series of far-reaching

regulations were brought into force under the Defence of the Realm Act, State insurance of shipping risks was instituted, and relief funds of various kinds were opened. The populace entered the conflict with enthusiasm, though it cannot be said that the Government whose motto in peace had been "Trust the people" showed any perceptible inclination to do so in war. As a direct consequence the nation generally was lulled into a sense of false security.

Lord Kitchener

The year 1915 opened gloomily enough with the sinking of the pre-Dreadnought battleship *Formidable*. She was torpedoed in the Channel on the 1st January, with a loss of 545 officers and men. Of those who were rescued, seventy-one owed their lives to the skill and heroism of the skipper and crew of the Brixham trawler *Provident*, who were afterward decorated by the King. On the Western Front the virtual deadlock that obtained at the close of 1914 was evident throughout 1915. Little appreciable difference was apparent at the end of the year, though there was heavy fighting, and more than one attempt made by both sides to break through. The most substantial progress was shown by the French in Upper Alsace, starting with the capture of Steinbach in January. The British troops were then becoming inured to the discomforts of the infamous 'Flanders mud.' They were reinforced by the arrival of

Plumer's 5th Corps, and in February by a Canadian Division that speedily proved its worth.

Seeking what they hoped was a weak part of the Allied defence, where the British line joined the French, the Germans made a bold bid for success near La Bassée on the 25th January. Our first line was broken by the blowing up of the trenches in an awkward salient, but fortunately the second line held. While this struggle was waxing and waning the enemy launched an attack on Givenchy, where a desperate struggle with bayonets and even fists took place in the village, which was effectually cleared. This series of actions continued until the 7th February, during the course of which Lance-Corporal Michael O'Leary won the V.C. by capturing two formidable barricades, killing eight Germans, and capturing two. Minor operations were frequent, and were regarded by the men as "all in the day's work," and not seldom, it may be added, in the night's work also.

Nothing on a large scale was attempted by Sir John French until March, when a brilliant but not triumphant page of British history was written. Remembering that we have the authority of Sir Douglas Haig for saying that "it was not until midsummer, 1916, that the artillery situation became even approximately adequate to the conduct of major operations," the battle of Neuve-Chapelle was really a remarkable achievement.

The force was now divided into the First, or Southern Army, commanded by Haig, and the Second, or Northern Army, under Smith-Dorrien. The main attack was delivered by the former, assisted and supported by the latter. The Field-Marshal's reasons which led him to

assume the offensive with the advent of brighter weather are thus summed up by himself: "The general aspect of the Allied situation throughout Europe, and particularly the marked success of the Russian Army in repelling the violent onslaughts of Marshal von Hindenburg; the apparent weakening of the enemy in my front, and the necessity for assisting our Russian Allies to the utmost by holding as many hostile troops as possible in the Western theatre; the efforts to this end which were being made by the French forces at Arras and Champagne; and, perhaps the most weighty consideration of all, the need of fostering the offensive spirit in the troops under my command after the trying and possibly enervating experiences which they had gone through of a severe winter in the trenches."

The capture of Neuve-Chapelle, some four miles north of La Bassée, and the pushing forward of the line "as far as possible to the east of that place," in the direction of Lille were the main objectives. The battle opened on the 10th March with a furious bombardment of the enemy's position by 350 guns, some borrowed from the French. This artillery action lasted over half an hour, and effectively prepared the way for the ensuing infantry attack, except as regards the northern extremity, where the entanglements were not properly cut.

The village was assaulted on the north-west by two brigades of Rawlinson's 4th Army Corps. The 25th Brigade met with little resistance, but the 23rd were held up by the insufficiently broken barbed wire. The men fell like ninepins before machine-gun and rifle fire. There was nothing to do but to

cry a halt and cut the obstacles with the artillery. Following the shelling of Neuve-Chapelle the 25th entered the village and turned the southern flank of the enemy's defences in front of the unfortunate 23rd, which eventually extricated itself from its perilous position. By 11 a.m. the place was captured, and the roads leading northward and south-westward from the east end were secured, enemy reinforcements being prevented from coming up by a curtain of shrapnel fire. To the south the Indians attacked the trenches nearest to them and advanced with splendid spirit. At Givenchy the failure of the artillery to destroy the entanglements was an insuperable bar to the progress of the 2nd Army.

A long delay followed, owing to the disorganization incurred, bad staff work, and the slowness with which the reserve brigades were brought up. Over four precious hours elapsed before a further advance was practicable, whereas the essence of waging war successfully is rapidity of action. Sir John French admits that "the enemy's resistance had been paralysed," which is tantamount to saying that, had the British been able to "keep on keeping on," the Germans would have suffered disaster.

The 21st and 24th Brigades were launched in the direction of Moulin du Pietre, and made excellent progress until held up by machine-guns concealed in houses and a line of trenches. Similar deadly weapons barred the advance of the 25th Brigade near the river Des Layes, and also brought the Indians to a standstill. More troops were called up, but German reinforcements likewise arrived, and the coming of night barred further progress.

On the 11th and 12th heavy mist assisted the enemy, because the aeroplanes could not 'spot' for the guns, and many of the telephone wires to the batteries had been cut by shell-fire. Some of the German positions were actually captured and held for several hours before the troops were compelled to evacuate them, and all counter-attacks were repulsed. Throughout the battle the Canadian Division kept the enemy busy in front of their trenches. On the night of the 12th Sir John French definitely put a stop to further offensive operations. The Field-Marshal has since stated that the battle was broken off "because we were brought to a standstill through want of ammunition." So far back as the previous September he had appealed for larger supplies without adequate response. Indeed, the offensive had only been possible because a small reserve had been accumulated. The net territorial result was an advance of about 1200 yards beyond the advanced German position on a front of 4000 yards.

No fewer than 12,811 officers and men were returned as killed, wounded, and missing. Several thousand German dead were left on the field, nearly 12,000 were wounded, and 1687 were taken prisoner. A counter-offensive on the part of the Germans on the 14th at Saint-Eloi, to the south-east of Ypres, ended in the British occupation of the town, while the enemy captured a mound with the neighbouring trenches to the south-east.

The British were now back at Ypres, the second battle of that name commencing on the 17th April. Hill 60, one of the enemy's observation posts to the south-east of the city, had been carefully mined. The

mine was exploded and the hill captured after heavy fighting, and the troops dug themselves in. Early the following morning the Germans made furious attacks with bomb and bayonet, gained a substantial footing on the prominence for a few hours, and were flung out in the evening. Dawn of the 19th was heralded by a concentrated bombardment of the position by the enemy, who also made their initial attempt to suffocate the defenders with poison gas. A much more serious trial of this devilish device took place a few days later against the French. The Turcos (native Algerian troops), gasping for breath, fled across the Yperlee Canal, leaving a gap of five miles on the north of the salient, thus necessitating the abandonment of fifty guns, including four British 4.7's. The 3rd Canadian Brigade also got a dose of the poison, but they prevented the enemy from outflanking them, and valiantly held the line while reinforcements were rushed up. The Canadian Scottish recovered a wood west of Saint-Julien by a magnificent charge, but were unable to hold it. Early on the following morning the gap was filled, chiefly by the 28th Division. During the course of the battle the line assumed such dangerous irregularities that Sir John French felt compelled to shorten it. This was done in so skilful a manner by Sir Herbert Plumer that it was some time before the Huns discovered that they were gassing abandoned trenches. Hill 60 fell to the Germans on the 5th May. The desperate second battle of Ypres ended on the 24th with a gas attack on an extended scale, but the road to Ypres was still secure.

On the 9th the 1st Army had begun a costly fight for the Aubers Ridge, the attack forming part of an

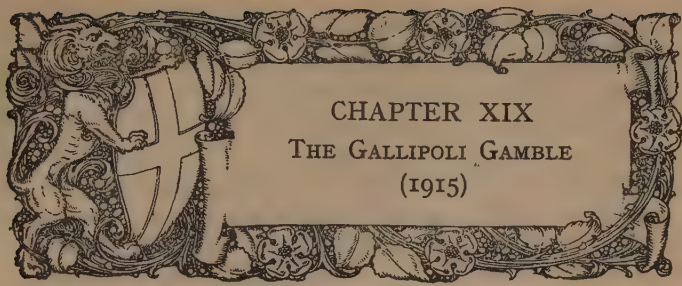
Allied offensive extending from south of Armentières to north of Arras. The height commanded Lille, and had it been carried the German position at La Bassée would have been rendered untenable. When the battle of Festubert ended ground had been won on a front of four miles to an average depth of 600 yards, but something infinitely more important than a slight gain of territory had been accomplished by the bloody sweat of the British and Indian troops, and in a way they least expected. The Military Correspondent of *The Times* had witnessed the battle and sent a message that "the want of an unlimited supply of high explosive was a fatal bar to our success." For nearly four days, during which he made a personal visit to France, Lord Northcliffe, the principal proprietor of the world's leading newspaper, pondered over this censored and mutilated dispatch. If he defied the Censor and commented on the matter, his journal might be stopped; if he desisted, Britain was in imminent danger of losing the war. He conceived it his duty to tell the public the truth, and he did so in no uncertain way. Northcliffe became the most unpopular man in Great Britain, but he saved the Empire. Within a few days a Coalition Ministry was formed, from it emerged the Ministry of Munitions, and the Army got the shells.

In the neighbourhood of Souchez the French met with considerable preliminary success, and the British captured trenches at Givenchy, Pilkem, and Hooge —where liquid fire made its first appearance on the 30th July; but it was not until the end of September that the supply of ammunition made it possible for the British to combine in another forward movement.

In the attack on the trenches between Lens and La Bassée known as the battle of Loos the British paid the Germans in their own coin by using gas. The conflict began on the 25th September, the main attack being undertaken by Haig's 1st Army. Following an intense bombardment of the enemy lines, Loos, Hill 70, Halluch, Cité Saint-Elie, and Haisnes were penetrated. Haisnes, however, could not be held, and the Highland Division failed to keep Hill 70 in its entirety. The battle was really a series of engagements which ended in the middle of October, and was aided by subsidiary attacks elsewhere, namely, in the Bellewaarde Woods, at Bois Grenier, Neuve-Chapelle, and Givenchy, and the bombardment of the Belgian coast by British warships. The British losses were over 50,000. Some 3000 Germans were captured, in addition to twenty-six field-guns and forty machine-guns. Loos was not a considerable success. On the right the French had gained important successes at Souchez and Vimy, the Germans were driven back in Champagne, and our Allies made appreciable advances in Upper Alsace.

Marshal von Hindenburg

Sir John French retired at the end of the year, and was created Viscount French of Ypres. His successor was Sir Douglas Haig, who retained the command until the Armistice.



CHAPTER XIX

The Gallipoli Gamble (1915)

THE initial attack on the forts at the entrance to the Dardanelles on the 3rd November, 1914, by the Allied squadrons was resumed on the 19th February, 1915. Without entirely accepting the Turkish official *communiqué*, which stated that "one soldier was slightly wounded by stone splinters," it has to be admitted that the success of the operation was very slight. The bombardment was renewed on the 25th, when the *Queen Elizabeth*, then the mightiest battleship afloat, took part. Mine-sweepers began clearing the entrance of the Straits, and on the following day landing parties finished the task of demolishing three of the forts. When three battleships entered the Dardanelles and attacked the fort and batteries at Kephez Point, on the Asiatic shore, it was found that the Turks had made use of their time and opportunities by preparing new emplacements and bringing up additional field-guns and howitzers. On the 4th March it was again found necessary to send landing parties to assist in the operations, and it became increasingly evident that if Constantinople were to be reached the Navy alone could not do it. Meanwhile the Turks and

their German allies were gaining strength with every day that passed.

In a general attack on the Narrows on the 18th the *Irresistible*, *Ocean*, and *Bouvet* were lost. Mr Winston Churchill was for the continuation of the naval operations, which he characterized as "a legitimate war gamble," but Lord Fisher disagreed.

H.M.S. Queen Elizabeth

Several days later it was announced that "the power of the Fleet to dominate the fortresses by superiority of fire seems to be established." Among those who witnessed this land battle fought at sea was General Sir Ian S. M. Hamilton, Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. He then cabled his "reluctant deductions" that the co-operation of the whole of the force under his command "would be required to enable the Fleet effectively to force the Dardanelles." Before the troops were ready, further delay was occasioned by the weather and the necessity for redistributing them on the transports. Sir Ian's preliminary observations convinced him that the

proposed theatre of operations was "strongly garrisoned throughout, and prepared for any such attempt." While the military arrangements were being organized the ships bombarded the forts whenever possible, and the mine-sweepers went about their task.

The Battle of the Landing began on the 25th April, 1915. The troops disembarked at two main points, the first a little north of Gaba Tepe, and the second at beaches V, W, and X, near Cape Helles, while feints were made at beaches S and Y, on either side of the toe of the peninsula, to protect the flanks and hold the enemy in check. Five battleships, a cruiser, eight destroyers, fifteen trawlers, and two aircraft vessels were concerned in the landing near Gaba Tepe, which was covered by gun-fire from three other vessels. Howitzers and field-guns, as well as guns from enemy warships at Chanak, were at once brought to bear on the transports, while the narrow beach was swept by shrapnel. It was under these terrible conditions that the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, familiarly known as the Anzacs (the word is formed from the initials of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) effected a foothold, which was not completed until the following day.

At Y beach, west of Krithia, the King's Own Scottish Borderers and the Marines boldly scaled the steep cliffs, but after severe fighting and heavy shelling were compelled to re-embark on the 26th. The landing at X, near Cape Tekke, was entirely successful, and the Royal Fusiliers dug themselves in; but at W, between Cape Helles and Cape Tekke, where the Lancashire Fusiliers and the Worcestershire Regiment were disembarked, the fire from the covering ships was

unable to clear the enemy's wire entanglements and trenches, and the Turks brought machine-guns "cunningly tucked away into holes in the cliff" to bear on the attacking party. Despite heavy losses, the troops pushed on, and the Maxims which enfiladed the main beach were rushed with the bayonet. A particularly fierce resistance was offered at V, a strip of about 300 yards dominated by Sedd-el-Bahr, and it was not until the afternoon of the 26th that it was captured. Here 2000 men of the Dublin Fusiliers, the Munster Fusiliers, the Hampshire Regiment, and the West Riding Field Company were landed from the *River Clyde*, a collier nicknamed 'the New Horse of Troy' on account of having large ports cut in her sides, through which the troops could pour out on to gangways supported by lighters and land directly on the beach. Not a shot was heard until the steamer was run ashore, when the Turks opened a devastating fire. Some of the men in the tows managed to jump out and find cover. An attempt was made to use the lighters, some of which broke adrift. Volunteers attempted to complete the gangway, but could not get their boats into position owing to the enemy's watchfulness until darkness obscured their movements.

During the night a hill dominating the position was captured by other forces, and the beach was won. From a 'camber' situated a little to the south of S, where the 2nd South Wales Borderers secured a firm footing, some of the Dublin Fusiliers attempted to reach the village Sedd-el-Bahr, and had to be withdrawn. The French landing at Kum Kale, supported by the French Fleet, and undertaken to distract the enemy, was successful, some 500 prisoners being cap-

Gallipoli and the Dardanelles

tured. These soldiers were withdrawn on the 26th and disembarked in the evening at V beach.

On the 28th a spirited attempt was made to secure the hill of Achi Baba. Progress was slow owing to the determined resistance of the enemy, who used their machine-guns to the fullest possible advantage. Ammunition running short, the plan failed to mature. Following the arrival of additional troops, it was renewed on the 6th May. After several days of desperate and costly fighting, in which the gain only amounted to a few hundred yards, the exhausted troops were ordered to entrench. Raids were frequently carried out, sapping and mining operations were undertaken. In June the line was pushed forward a little, despite intense heat, but it was fairly obvious that if further large reinforcements were not sent the 'gamble' would completely justify Mr Churchill's description. The Navy fared no better than the Army. The *Goliath*, *Triumph*, and *Majestic* were lost, and enemy submarines had put in an unwelcomed appearance. British under-water craft threaded their way through the Straits and exacted a heavy toll of Turkish shipping, while E 11 caused consternation in Constantinople by torpedoing a transport lying alongside the quay at the arsenal.

In due course Sir Ian Hamilton received further support, and a flanking movement on a big scale was undertaken. A large force was to be landed at Anzac, seize the ridges and peaks of Sari Bair, and advance to Maidos. At Suvla Bay, some four miles north of Anzac, two divisions were to be disembarked to support the left flank. To divert the attention of the enemy there was also to be an attack from Cape

Helles. At Anzac the organization was completely successful, and a hand-to-hand fight took place at the Lone Pine position, the 1st Australian Brigade pulling pine logs, teak planks, and railway sleepers from the enemy trenches and capturing four lines. For several days the struggle for the crest of Sari Bair continued, and a few Gurkhas and South Lancashires actually reached the summit. Unfortunately, the attack from Suvla by the 9th Corps was not pushed home with sufficient rapidity. Sir Ian Hamilton viewed the situation personally and found that "the one fatal error was inertia. And inertia prevailed." That disability, from whatever cause, lost the battle.

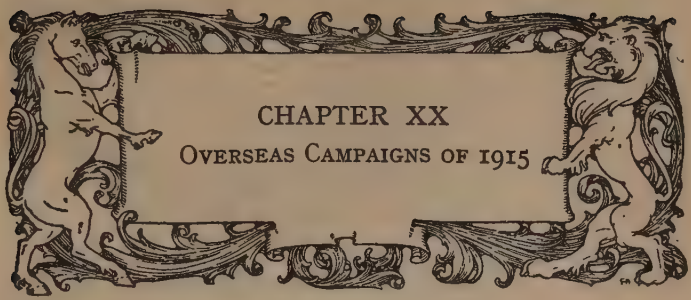
Another attack was attempted on the 21st August, but only a section of the entrenchments captured could be held. Outnumbered, short of reinforcements and munitions, with sickness rampant, trench warfare became the order of the day, though before the end of the month the gallant Australians, under the command of their beloved leader, General Birdwood, popularly known as 'the soul of Anzac,' completed the capture of Hill 60, thereby securing safer communications between Anzac and Suvla Bay. Sir Ian Hamilton was able to report a gain of 300 yards along four miles of the Suvla Bay front during September. On the 16th October he was recalled, and Sir Charles Monro was appointed to the command. Kitchener's visit to the scene of operations resulted in orders for the evacuation of Gallipoli, a necessary decision scarcely calculated to impress such hesitating neutrals as Greece and Bulgaria.

The operation of withdrawing the troops was the greatest triumph of organization throughout the war.

It began on the 10th December, 1915, and ended on the 9th January, 1916. It proceeded gradually, so that the Turks might not know what was happening. They continued to think that the trenches were fully manned, even when the last soldier had left the shambles of Gallipoli. The probable losses were assessed at a division; in actual fact one man was slightly wounded.

"After all, I should have won that battle!" Napoleon is reported to have said of Waterloo. Judged by the valour displayed and the blood shed we should have won the Dardanelles Campaign. It cost the Empire 39,454 officers and men dead and missing; 78,095 were wounded, and from the 25th April to the 11th December, 1915, no fewer than 96,683 were admitted to hospital.

The main burden of the disastrous but glorious campaign was borne on the sturdy shoulders of the Australians and New Zealanders, who won the unstinted admiration of the world for their fortitude, courage, and persistence in the face of difficulties as great as ever faced an army. The peninsula will always be remembered as the scene of Australasia's Epic, and the word 'Anzac' is a proud possession to the Antipodes for ever.



CHAPTER XX

Overseas Campaigns of 1915

WITH the settlement of the Rebellion an advance was made in the German South-west Africa campaign. Swakopmund, a little north of Walfish Bay and the principal enemy harbour, was occupied in the middle of January, when Botha assumed command, ably supported by Smuts. Several columns penetrated the territory at different points. General Sir Duncan McKenzie advanced from Lüderitzbucht in March, while in the south Colonel Van Deventer moved *via* Schuit Drift (Cape Colony), and Colonel Berrangé from Kuruman (Bechuanaland). Following the battle of Gibeon, fought by McKenzie on the 26th of that month, the whole southern territory passed out of German hands. Botha pushed forward as rapidly as possible, mainly following the line of the Swakop River, and on the 12th May Windhoek, the capital, was occupied. As most of the enemy had made their way northward, further operations were necessary. These were ended by the unconditional surrender of Governor Seitz and Lieutenant-Colonel Franks on the 9th July. Nearly 3500 prisoners were taken, in addition to thirty-seven field-guns and supplies. Considering

that some of the wells had been poisoned, that much of the colony is arid desert, and that arduous and oftentimes difficult work had been undertaken in connexion with reconstructing various sections of railway, the campaign must be regarded as a brilliant one.

In Cameroon the Germans began the New Year with an offensive, the British and French forces being numerically weak. It ended in the enemy's sustaining severe losses at Kopongo and Edea. When it became possible for the Allies to advance, the movement of the various columns through barren country, swamp, and almost impenetrable bush, oftentimes in tropical rain, could not be other than exceedingly slow. A bold attempt made by Dobell and Aymerich to reach Yaunde, some 150 miles inland, to which place the Germans had moved their headquarters, ended in retreat. In the north General Largeau captured Kusseri on the 21st September, a leading feature of the struggle being a spirited bayonet charge on the part of the Senegalese. With several columns moving from different points, Dobell renewed the advance the same month, and Banyo was occupied on the 24th October. The action which brought about the defeat of the German garrison on a neighbouring mountain a few days later was characterized by the Commander-in-Chief as "the most arduous ever fought by native African troops." Colonel Gorges found that Yaunde had been evacuated, and marched in on the 1st January, 1916. The British column was soon joined by the other contingents. On the 18th February the conquest of Cameroon was complete.

In East Africa, Jassin was taken on the 2nd January, 1915, and recaptured by the enemy ten

days later. Beyond a number of actions on the frontiers of Rhodesia and the shores of the great lakes,

The shaded areas represent British territory at the conclusion of peace

at Bukoba, on Victoria Nyanza, where the fort and wireless station were destroyed, at Luvungi, north of

Tanganyika, and at Kissenji, on Kivu, little was possible until sufficient forces could be collected. Assisted by Belgian and native troops, Major J. J. O'Sullevan beat off a vigorous attack that lasted for several days in July and August at Saisi, in North-eastern Rhodesia, and the Belgians repulsed a further attempt in September. The enemy, who probably had some 25,000 European and native troops at their disposal, were particularly active in making periodical raids on the Uganda and Voi-Maktau railways. The troops were now under the command of Major-General M. I. Tighe, who early realized that until they were reinforced a successful invasion of German East Africa was out of the question.

The modest ambition of the expedition to the Persian Gulf was considerably augmented in 1915. Very soon it became evident that the Arabs were making common cause with the Turks, and were by no means disposed to leave the British troops in peaceful possession of the points they occupied. Near Ahwaz, in Persia, where a brigade had been sent to protect the oil pipe, a reconnaissance showed that a force of 12,000 was in the vicinity, and a scouting party was met by cavalry which pursued it to Shaiba, within half a dozen miles of Basra. In April Sir John Nixon succeeded Sir Arthur Barrett, and considerable reinforcements were received. These arrived none too soon, for on the 12th some 22,000 of the enemy attacked Shaiba. On being repulsed the Turks took up a position at Barjasiya, where they again sustained defeat.

Gorringe had no difficulty in driving the enemy in the neighbourhood of Ahwaz across the frontier, where they joined forces with another body at Amara,

about 100 miles as the crow flies north of Basra. He also administered a lesson to various Arab tribes which showed more sympathy with the Turks than was deemed advisable. The enemy position on a number of islands north of Kurna, which it will be remembered was in our hands, was heavily bombarded on the 31st May, the British, covered by a naval flotilla, advancing in native boats protected by iron plates. The heights were carried, and the Turks retreated up the Tigris in steamers and other craft. The pursuit was continued by the British flotilla, followed by the troops. On the 3rd June Major-General Sir Charles V. F. Townshend captured Amara, seventy-five miles from Kurna. From the latter place Gorringe, assisted by the Navy, undertook a similar operation against the Turks concentrated near Nasrieh, at the southern end of the Shatt-el-Hai, and therefore strategically important. The enemy fought with great determination, but did not prevent the attacking force from entering the town. They thereupon retreated in the direction of Kut-el-Amara, where it was known that Nur-ed-Din had amassed a considerable body of troops. It was decided that Townshend should push forward to Kut, a town of about 6000 inhabitants. This was entered on the 29th September, following the battle of that name which the hero of the siege of Chitral won on the previous day, ably assisted by the gunboats.

Baghdad was distant nearly 230 miles along the tortuous Tigris from Kut, and about ninety miles by land. With the Turks in disorder, Townshend at first entertained hopes that he might reach the city of the Caliphs without waiting for reinforcements.

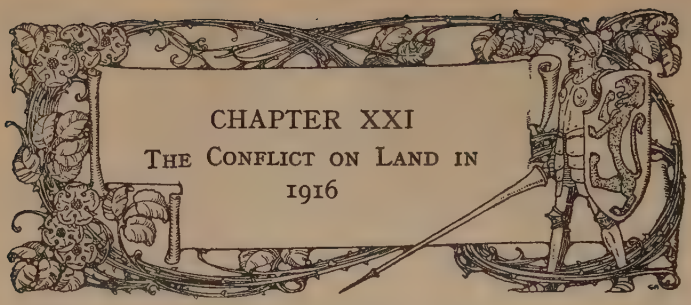
On reaching Azizieh, however, he was informed by an aerial scout that the retreating enemy had taken up a strong post at Ctesiphon, astride the Baghdad road and the river. He therefore informed Nixon on the 3rd October that on military grounds it would be expedient to consolidate the British position at Kut. "If, on the other hand," he wired, "it is the desire of Government to occupy Baghdad, then, unless great risk is to be run, it is, in my opinion, absolutely necessary that the advance from Kut by road should be carried out methodically by two divisions or one army corps, or by one division supported closely by another complete division, exclusive of the garrisons of the important places of Nasiriyah, Ahwaz, and Amara. It is now quite impossible for laden ships to go up."

Whoever was at fault, the fatal order was given for an advance on Baghdad. Mr Asquith, doubtless anxious to show that this campaign was likely to meet with a better fate than the Dardanelles fiasco, waxed optimistic as to its potentialities. "I do not think," he averred, "that in the whole course of the war there has been a series of operations more carefully contrived, more brilliantly conducted, and with a better prospect of final success."

On the 22nd November the battle of Ctesiphon opened auspiciously. The first line of trenches was captured in magnificent style, despite the opposition of greatly superior numbers. The troops, however, lost heavily as they dashed toward the second line, portions of which they cleared. When darkness fell the issue was still undecided, and Townshend withdrew his men to the trenches they had taken in the opening

phase of the struggle. The heavy losses he had sustained compelled him on the following morning to remain on the defensive. Attack succeeded attack, reinforcements were flung against the dauntless line, which held firm until the night of the 25th, when Townshend retired to the place where his boats had been secured. On the 3rd December—a month after the Prime Minister's statement—the gallant little force was back at Kut, having been molested more than once during the retreat and lost three gunboats by grounding. Although 1650 prisoners had been taken, the British losses amounted to 4567. Baghdad had proved a military mirage, and Townshend settled down to his second siege.

The Suez Canal is the chief artery of the British Empire. It therefore had special attractions for both Germany and Turkey. After crossing 150 miles of desert, one enemy column attacked Ismailia, on Lake Timseh, another Toussum, a little to the south of the lake, and feints were made against El Kantara, at the north of Balâh Lake, and Suez. On the 3rd February the whole line from Ismailia to the Great Bitter Lake became engaged. During the preceding night some of the Turks had endeavoured to cross the Canal in pontoons and on rafts, a few managing to accomplish the voyage despite the vigilance of sentries and the naval flotilla. Everywhere the attack proved abortive. On the 4th the British troops advanced across the Canal and took many prisoners, but thanks in great measure to a furious sandstorm the defeated enemy effected a retreat.



CHAPTER XXI

The Conflict on Land in 1916

A BRITISH statesman drawing up a balance-sheet for 1915 would not have been over-optimistic regarding the possibilities of the succeeding twelve months. While Italy had joined the Allies in May, Bulgaria had thrown in her lot with the enemy in October. On the Western Front there was to all intents and purposes a deadlock; on the Eastern Front Serbia and Montenegro had been overrun, the Russian 'steam-roller' had receded from Poland and Galicia, and although Salonica had been occupied by an Allied army, the attitude of Greece still remained uncertain. The Dardanelles expedition had been a costly failure. The Mesopotamia campaign, so rich in promise, seemed likely to prove the same. Aircraft had raided defenceless towns in England. On the ocean alone were the Allies supreme, thanks in large measure to the British Navy; and even there the Germans were playing havoc with shipping by means of their under-sea warfare. He who commands the sea commands colonies—both his own and those of the enemy. German East Africa alone remained to be taken.

From February 1916 until the following July the

titanic struggle for Verdun was the outstanding feature of the Western Front. "They shall not pass!" was the motto of the French, and they did not. Massed infantry attacks, aerial and terrestrial bombardment, the thousand and one devilish devices of modern warfare failed to shake Pétain's men. At the order of the German Crown Prince half a million men battered themselves against the rock. What ground was won was nearly all retaken before the dawn of 1917, and Verdun remained in French hands.

The British forces now consisted of Monro's 1st Army, Plumer's 2nd Army, Allenby's 3rd Army, and Rawlinson's 4th Army. To relieve the pressure around Verdun Haig took over twelve miles of the French front, and on the 1st July, in co-operation with Foch's troops, launched the heaviest attack that had been undertaken. Although the area of the fighting was not more than twenty miles square, the conflict was to last for seven months, which indicates something of its intense ferocity. "From the opening of the Somme battle in 1916 to the termination of hostilities," Haig wrote, "the British Armies were subjected to a strain of the utmost severity, which never ceased, and consequently had little or no opportunity for the rest and training they so greatly needed." As usual, the advance was preceded by a terrific preliminary bombardment, nearly 13,000 tons of ammunition being used during the day, while those serving the guns were about half the strength of the attacking infantry divisions. The 7th Corps, facing Gommecourt, met with a heavy defeat; the 8th Corps, which attacked Beaumont-Hamel, fared no better; the troops who sought to take Beaucourt-sur-Ancre were

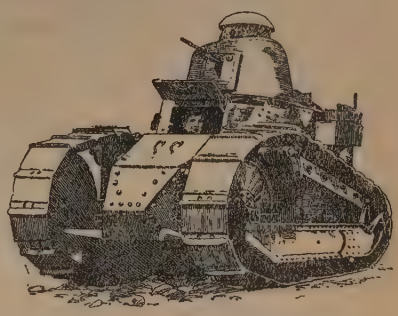
compelled to retire; at terrible cost the Irish gained the first two lines of the Schwaben Redoubt, and part of the Leipzig Redoubt was held by the Highlanders. Several brigades of Pulteney's 3rd Corps, to the east of Albert, went over the top and literally ceased to exist. In the sector north of the Ancre there was nothing but disaster.

Although nothing could compensate for the losses sustained, considerable gains were effected farther south during the first few days of the battle. Montauban, Mametz, Fricourt, and La Boiselle were captured, and by the 5th the British had broken through the German line for over a mile on a six-mile front and secured nearly 6000 prisoners. Foch, taking the enemy by surprise, was well on the road to Peronne. In his report on the opening phase General Sixt von Arnim acknowledged that the British infantry showed great dash in attack, skill in rapidly consolidating captured positions, and great tenacity in defence. Important positions were methodically bombarded, assisted by well-organized aerial observation.

After three days' hard fighting the 'Cockchafers' of the much-advertised Prussian Guard were forced to give way at Mametz Wood and Contalmaison. An attack on the second line along the whole front resulted in the capture by the British of several fortified villages, including Orvillers after a stubborn defence of over a fortnight, and three woods. Drawing on their reinforcements, Delville Wood was recaptured by the enemy, Longueval was partly retaken, and then entirely lost by them. By the middle of October, after a swaying battle in which the Allies sometimes

lost but usually gained, Haig and Foch had secured the Thiepval Ridge.

It was on the 15th of the previous month that the tanks made their first appearance. These miniature moving fortresses, which mounted 6-pdr. single-tube Q.F. guns, got their name from having been mistaken by some inquisitive Tommies for a new form of receptacle for water. Mr Winston Churchill is responsible for the suggestion that if their value had been recognized by the military in the earlier stages of the war, results might have followed which would have shortened the conflict and have saved millions of lives. Opinions to the same effect have been expressed by various German authorities. Although he in no way detracts from the value of mechanical contrivances, Haig points out that they cannot by themselves decide a campaign. "Tanks," he says, "require the closest artillery support to enable them to reach their objectives without falling victims to the enemy's artillery, and are dependent upon the infantry to hold the position they have won."



A Tank

The battle of the Ancre, which began on the 11th November with the usual artillery preparation, was a sequel to the ill-success which had attended the attack between Gommecourt and Thiepval in the opening stages of the battle of the Somme. The defences proved

to be more formidable than ever, for the intervening months had not been spent in thumb-twiddling on the part of the Germans. When the infantry attacked Serre on the 13th the effort was no more successful than it had been on the 1st July. The right wing carried Saint-Pierre-Divion without undue difficulty, the Highland Territorials secured Beaumont-Hamel, the Royal Naval Division, assisted by a couple of tanks, cleared a redoubt covering Beaucourt, and later the village was taken by assault.

From the 1st July until the 18th November the British took no fewer than 38,000 prisoners, twenty-nine heavy guns, ninety-six field-guns, 136 trench mortars, and 514 machine-guns. Stubborn fighting, long sustained, characterized the offensive of 1916, which relieved the pressure on Verdun, wore down the strength of the enemy and deteriorated his moral to an appreciable extent, kept his main forces centred on the Western Front, and greatly encouraged the Allies. In the position not directly affected by the battle of the Somme the British had carried out over 350 raids.

Some at least of the disasters which Russia had sustained in the previous year were retrieved in the Bukovina, the Austrian province south-east of Galicia. In Armenia the offensive against the Turks also went well, Erzerum falling in February and Trebizond in April. It was hoped that the Russians working down from the north and the British pushing up from the south would reach Baghdad before the end of the year. So far as the latter operations were concerned, everything, of course, depended on the raising of the siege of Kut. The relief expedition was put in

charge of Major-General Sir F. J. Aylmer, who was compelled to make the best use of a makeshift force that lacked many things, including sufficient river

Egypt and the Middle East

and road transport, efficient medical arrangements, and adequate artillery. He dared not wait, for the enemy was gaining strength and now had German officers, and Townshend urged the necessity for early relief. On the 7th–9th January Aylmer gave battle at Sheikh Saad, and caused the Turks to fall back with an

estimated loss of 4500 men at a cost of 4262 casualties to his own troops. Abominable weather set in, turning the neighbouring country into a veritable bog, making the river rise rapidly, and generally hampering the progress of the British while it added to the strength of the position at the *wadi* on which the enemy had retired. Nevertheless Aylmer attacked on the 13th and carried the *wadi*, again at heavy cost. The climatic conditions were worse at Umm el Hanna, where the Turks made another stand and the British achieved nothing beyond 2741 casualties.

Early in March, when the ground had hardened a little, Aylmer made a night march of fourteen miles across the desert, firmly determined, if in any way possible, to carry Ess Sinn, within seven miles of the beleaguered city, and relieve Townshend and his army of heroes. The operation was finely conceived and finely executed, for the Turks were unaware of the presence of their dogged enemy until they were face to face. Delay occurred in attacking, however, and before the assault had developed Turkish reinforcements had arrived. The British fought till they were exhausted, and on the following day were compelled to retire. The casualties numbered some 3000. Aylmer was now succeeded by Gorringe, who received reinforcements and carried Umm el Hanna and Fellahieh, but twice failed to capture Sanna-i-yat, some fifteen miles below Kut, while the entrenchments at Beit Aiessa were taken but not held. Storms and floods put an end to further progress. A last desperate attempt to send food to Kut was made on the 24th April by steamer. The *Julnar* ran the gauntlet of the Turkish fire and succeeded in getting within eight

or nine miles of the city. She put up a magnificent fight, but failed. On the 29th the 9000 starving troops who comprised the garrison of Kut surrendered after a siege of 145 days. In the attempts that had been made to relieve them 23,000 casualties had been sustained.

Ess Sinn fell to Gorringe on the 20th May, and the enemy was forced back to the Shatt-el-Hai. Following a thorough and very necessary reorganization of our *personnel* and *matériel*, the Turks were driven from the latter stronghold by Marshall in December and forced to retire on Kut.

Lieut.-General Sir Percy Lake, who had taken over Nixon's post as Commander-in-Chief in Mesopotamia in January 1916, was succeeded by Lieut.-General Sir Stanley Maude in August, but the latter generously admitted that Lake had laid the firm foundations for the ensuing winter campaign.

On the western frontier of Egypt the Senussi, a Mohammedan sect, gave much trouble in the early part of 1916. The Kaiser, with his marked fondness for the Orient and his overweening belief that all followers of Islam were desirous to see the defeat of the British, had certainly done his best to stir up the enthusiasm of these fanatics. In a letter in Arabic that was found bearing his signature, announcing the sending of arms, money, and "tried chiefs," he is styled "son of Charlemagne, Allah's Envoy, Islam's Protector." He informed Sidi Ahmed that "Our common enemies, whom Allah annihilate to the last man, shall fly before thee." The Senussi made a number of raids into Egypt, necessitating the withdrawal of garrisons from several places, including Sollum. Sir John Maxwell, in supreme command,

ordered Major-General A. Wallace to attack the Arabs at Halazin, and on the 23rd January they were driven from their positions, and their camp occupied and burnt. The Sikhs, South Africans, and New Zealanders "fought with invincible dash and resolution." At Agagia on the 25th February the Senussi were again routed. Barrini was reoccupied three days later, and Sollum on the 14th March.

In the Sinai peninsula a railway was constructed in the north to Bir el Mazar by Sir Archibald Murray, water-pipes were laid down, and wells prepared. Whenever practicable the flying sentinels of the Royal Air Force kept careful watch on movements of the Turks, although they did not prevent them from springing one or two surprise attacks on garrisons and outposts that ended favourably for the enemy. In July some 18,000 Turks commanded by von Kressenstein advanced from El Arish on the Suez Canal, with the result that in the ensuing operations in the Katia district, including the battle of Romani, they lost half their number, plus considerable transport and munitions. From Bir el Abd a Desert Column pushed forward in December and found El Arish evacuated. The enemy had taken up another position at Maghdaba, to the south, where many were taken prisoners on the 24th.

In the Sudan the Sultan of Darfur stirred up trouble, but the plot rebounded. An expedition organized by Sir Reginald Wingate, the Sirdar, defeated Ali Dinar's forces at Beringia on the 22nd May, and in an engagement on the 6th November the Sultan was killed. After that the flames of rebellion rapidly died out.

Excellent progress marked the various stages of the campaign in German East Africa under Smuts. He

first bent himself to the task of clearing the enemy from British territory about Mount Kilimanjaro, where the Germans had strongly entrenched themselves, particularly at Taveta. General Tighe had already formed a plan of campaign, which the South African General adopted. The advance was begun early in March with three columns, and made rapid progress despite the difficult nature of the country, which abounds with dense forest, swamps, and waterless desert. Although an encircling movement was tried and failed, Taveta was evacuated by the enemy and occupied on the 9th. The first post to be taken in German territory was Moshi, which fell on the 13th, and the Kilimanjaro area was freed by the battle of Kahe Hill on the 21st. Again the Germans were able to withdraw, after doing some damage to the railway.

Smuts now reorganized his forces, separating them into three divisions, the 1st consisting of Indian and British troops under Hoskins, the 2nd and 3rd composed of South Africans commanded by van Deventer and Brits respectively. It is obviously impossible to follow the work of the various columns in detail. The main force advanced along the railway to Wilhelmstal, the capital of the Usambara district, without heavy fighting, and on the 7th July Tanga, the terminus, was in Smuts' possession. Dar-es-Salaam surrendered on the 4th September after the railway station and harbour works had been wrecked. The Belgians and Portuguese also co-operated from their own territories, and von Lettow-Vorbeck's defence of necessity degenerated into guerrilla warfare.

In England much had been done toward the prosecution of the war. In October 1915 the King had

asked males of all classes to come forward voluntarily and take their share in the fighting, and Lord Derby, as Director-General of Recruiting, had inaugurated a group system for obtaining both married and unmarried men according to age. The first Military Service Act was brought into operation on the 10th February, 1916, and conscripted all single men between 18 and 41. This was augmented by the passing of a Bill in the following May rendering liable to service all men of the ages mentioned. It was then stated that 5,041,000 had voluntarily enlisted. A large number of local tribunals for hearing claims for exemption or postponement came into operation. Ireland was excluded from both measures.

The entry of Rumania into the war on the 27th August was heralded far and wide as a tremendous asset to the Allies. Before the close of the year, however, the Germans had rolled back the tide of invasion from Transylvania, where the Rumanians had made rapid progress in the early stages of their intervention, conquered Wallachia, and entered Bukarest in triumph. The downfall of Rumania was one of the main reasons for Mr Asquith's resignation on the 5th December. He was succeeded by Mr Lloyd George, who had become Secretary of State for War after the death of Lord Kitchener, who was drowned on the 5th June, while on his way to Russia.

The military situation for Britain and her Allies at the end of 1916 was hopeful but not radiant. While the Germans had been compelled to give ground on the Western Front, the Russian offensive had died down and Rumania was being strangled. Having gained Gorizia, the Italians were at a standstill on the

Isonzo and the Carso. Though Kut had fallen, the situation was improving in Mesopotamia. Smuts had demonstrated his prowess in German East Africa.

The Western Front, 1916

Rebellion had raised her hydra-head in Ireland without receiving the enemy support that had been promised. England had shown her determination to win the war by adopting conscription, and the Air Service had been largely augmented. No fewer than 611 enemy machines were destroyed or damaged by the Allies in 1916. We shall survey the 'sea affair' in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XXII

The Command of the Sea (1915–1916)

WE have studied the work of the Fleet off the Dardanelles in 1915, where the Navy was characterized by Sir Ian Hamilton as "both father and mother to the Army." Nearer home the ceaseless warfare against submarines was the leading feature. From time to time the Germans intensified their underseas campaign. On the 18th February, 1915, the waters surrounding the United Kingdom, and "all English seas," were proclaimed as a war area, and all British shipping was regarded as legitimate prey. Neutrals were informed that there was a possibility of their vessels being "confused with ships serving warlike purposes" if they were found in the zone. The *Lusitania*, of the Cunard Line, was torpedoed and sunk on the 7th of the following May, a crowning infamy involving the loss of 1225 lives. When Britain gradually began to arm her merchantmen for the purpose of defence, the enemy retorted on the 1st March, 1916, by treating them as belligerents. Meanwhile various devices were brought into use to destroy the underwater craft, which were playing sad havoc with British supplies. Seaplanes and handy little airships

called 'blimps' 'spotted' for them from above the surface, dropping bombs and depth-charges wherever opportunity offered, armed motor launches and destroyers hunted for them, nets were sunk in their track, trawlers fished for them with sweeps, and patrols had their regular beats like policemen. Sometimes it seemed as though the menace were well in hand, but the last quarter of 1916 was a particularly bad period, and the Minister of Agriculture truthfully characterized the British Isles as "a beleaguered city." In the middle of October it was stated in the House of Commons that we had lost by enemy action and by marine risks 2,000,000 gross tons of shipping since the beginning of the war. On the 4th December, 1916, Sir John Jellicoe became First Sea Lord in place of Sir Henry Jackson, who had succeeded Lord Fisher in May 1915.

In the period under survey there were but two actions in the North Sea in which large naval ships were used. The first was the battle of the Dogger Bank, fought on the 24th January, 1915; the second was the battle of Jutland, on the 31st May, 1916, which proved to be the last big engagement of the war.

Various attempts have been made to explain how it came about that a section of the High Sea Fleet was cruising outside the 'wet triangle' of Heligoland at 7 a.m. on the former occasion. It has been suggested that von Hipper contemplated a raid on the Tyne or the Firth of Forth, but judging by the time-table of previous operations of that character this does not seem highly probable. The bombardment of Great Yarmouth in the previous November, and of Scarborough, the Hartlepools, and

Whitby in the following month, had taken place in the early morning. The same big ships used in the latter attack were employed on this occasion, with the addition of the *Blücher*, which suffered disaster. A further suggestion is that the German Admiral deliberately sought Beatty's patrolling squadron with the idea of leading him on to a position where battleships were waiting, playing much the same game as we had tried in the Heligoland Bight affair. This theory appears feasible in the light of the First Lord's explanation. "The action was not forced," he said, "because the enemy, after abandoning their wounded consort, the *Blücher*, made good their escape into waters infested by their submarines and mines."

Earl Beatty

The battle-cruisers at the British Admiral's disposal consisted of the *Lion* (flagship), the *Princess Royal*, the *Tiger*, the *New Zealand*, and the *Indomitable*. In addition there were several light cruisers and destroyer flotillas. The German force was made up of the battle-cruisers *Seydlitz* (flagship), *Derfflinger*, and *Moltke*, the armoured cruiser *Blücher*, half a dozen light cruisers, and attendant destroyers. Almost at once the enemy squadron altered course and made for home on seeing Beatty's scouts, while their pursuers settled down to a long stern chase. It was not until 9.9 a.m. that the *Lion* scored her first shot on the *Blücher*, the rear ship. Eleven minutes later

the *Tiger* opened fire on the same vessel, the flagship shifting her attention to the *Derfflinger*, the third ship in the line. Several salvoes from the *Lion's* four bow guns hit her at a range which had now closed to 18,000 yards. At 9.14 a.m. the enemy opened fire. Twenty minutes later the *Princess Royal* concentrated on the *Blücher*, now showing signs of reduced speed by dropping astern. When the *New Zealand* came into range she took the armoured cruiser in hand, and the *Princess Royal* shifted to the third ship in the line, severely punishing her in the process.

It then became evident that the German destroyers were preparing for an attack, whereupon some of the British destroyers drew ahead to drive off the enemy, with the result that the 'hussar stroke' was not delivered. Within thirty-five minutes of the *Lion's* first hit on the *Blücher* the latter was a doomed ship. The leading vessel, the *Seydlitz*, which the flagship was now engaging, and which had also had a warm reception from the *Tiger*, was on fire. The *Princess Royal* still concentrated on the *Derfflinger*, and the *New Zealand* on the stricken armoured cruiser, assisted by the *Tiger* when smoke precluded her from bringing her guns to bear on the *Seydlitz*. The *Moltke*, the second ship of the German line, seems to have escaped with little damage, largely by reason of the dense smoke which she threw out.

The pommelling given to the Germans was evidently not at all to their liking, for they now disposed their destroyers between the British and themselves, so as to create a heavy smoke-screen. This also allowed them to alter course and increase the distance between

them and their adversaries. A second attack by destroyers was threatened, but the heavy fire of the *Lion* and the *Tiger*—the 'Cats,' as Beatty called them—made their retirement imperative, and they fell back into their previous positions without carrying the plan into operation.

The *Blücher* hauled out to port at 10.48 a.m. She was badly on fire and had a heavy list. The *Indomitable* was ordered to put an end to her struggles. Shortly after an abortive submarine attack, a chance shot struck the *Lion* in the bow, damaging a feed tank and thereby putting the port engine out of commission. She was unable to take further part in the fighting. In his preliminary telegraphic dispatch Sir David says that this misfortune "undoubtedly deprived" us of a "greater victory." The *Indomitable* was still busy with the *Blücher*, but the Admiral ordered the other three battle-cruisers to continue the attack. Signalling a destroyer alongside, Beatty transferred his flag to her with as little loss of time as was possible, and endeavoured to rejoin the squadron. He met his ships at noon returning. All the German vessels, with the exception of the defeated *Blücher*, had succeeded in escaping. There is little doubt that the light cruiser *Arethusa* was responsible for the firing of the torpedo that actually sank the armoured cruiser.

There has been much controversy regarding the tactics of the battle of giants fought off Jutland on the 31st May, 1916. The all-important result of the engagement is that the German High Sea Fleet never again contested the British command of the sea. With half a dozen battle-cruisers, and four battleships

of the *Queen Elizabeth* class under Rear-Admiral Hugh Evan-Thomas, accompanied by light cruisers and destroyers, Beatty was taking part in one of the periodical sweeps of the North Sea, when he sighted von Hipper's five battle-cruisers and attendant craft, bent on "an enterprise directed toward the north," according to the German Admiralty report. The British Admiral was then proceeding northward to join the Battle Fleet. Hipper immediately altered course to the south-east to come up with Scheer's main body, and Beatty manœuvred to place his vessels between the enemy and his base. Both sides opened fire almost at the same moment at a range of 18,500 yards, which was gradually decreased, and the action was sustained with vigour. The *Indefatigable* was struck and blew up. There was also a simultaneous torpedo attack, the British intercepting a light cruiser and fifteen destroyers. In the ensuing engagement, fought at close quarters, two German destroyers were sunk, the attack on the big ships was prevented, and the enemy was forced to fall back on his battle-cruisers. The British lost no vessels, and although several destroyers had fallen astern in the fight, seven pressed home their attack on the enemy battle-cruisers. Of these, three sustained a terrific fire from battleships at close range, two being lost.

Meanwhile the battle-cruisers continued to be heavily engaged, the conflict being "of a very fierce and resolute character." The battleships were also taking part in the struggle at long range. The accurate and rapid fire of the British was now in marked superiority to that of their opponents, despite

reduced visibility. The third ship in the enemy's line was seen to be on fire. This triumph, however, was poor compensation for a heavy score on the opposite side. A shell hit the *Queen Mary* and exploded her magazine. When the enemy's Battle Fleet was sighted Beatty altered course northward to lead the Germans toward Jellicoe's main force. Evan-Thomas's 5th Battle Squadron supported the battle-cruisers "brilliantly and effectively," and came under the fire of Scheer's leading ships, now obscured by mist, while the British vessels were silhouetted against a clear horizon. For an hour the range was reduced to 14,000 yards, during which the Germans "received very severe punishment," one of their battle-cruisers being compelled to haul out of the line badly crippled, while others "showed signs of increasing injury." At 5.56 p.m. Jellicoe's leading ships were sighted on the port bow. Beatty altered course to the east, reducing the range by another 2000 yards.

This reinforcement, consisting of Hood's 3rd Battle-Cruiser Squadron, took stations ahead, closing with the leading German ship at 8000 yards. The *Invincible*, severely punishing her opponent, was struck in a vital spot and disappeared. Beatty then went in support, Hood's two remaining vessels being ordered to support the line astern. The light shortly afterward changed in favour of the British. "At intervals," says Sir David in his dispatch, "their [the enemy's] ships showed up clearly, enabling us to punish them very severely and establish a definite superiority over them." So great was the execution that the German line "was crumpled up, leaving battleships

Incident in the Battle of Jutland: German Ship sinking
C. Clark

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as targets for the majority of our battle-cruisers," while Evan-Thomas engaged battleships. Yet before Jellicoe's 'heavy fathers' were in line the *Defence* blew up, the *Warrior* was disabled, the *Invincible* was a total wreck, and the *Marlborough* was torpedoed. The *Black Prince* was sunk later.

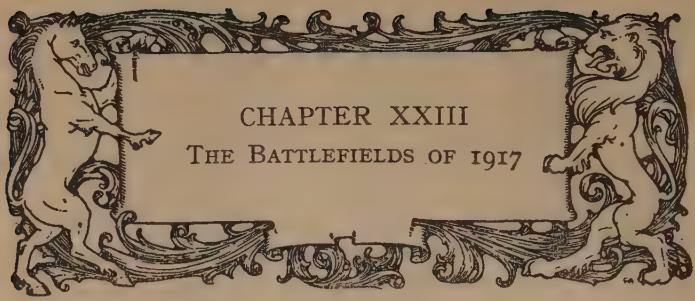
The Grand Fleet was approaching in six parallel columns of four ships each. To bring them into a single line it was necessary to deploy. This having been accomplished, the German destroyers attacked, and in order to avoid the torpedoes the British Commander-in-Chief turned his battle squadrons two points to port, away from the weapons of destruction, and as he did not deem that a sufficient margin for safety, a further turn of two points was ordered. The manœuvre was successful, and twenty or more torpedoes were observed to pass the ships. It is argued that precious time was lost during this movement, which opened the range and enabled Scheer to alter course and flee. Had Jellicoe turned to starboard, as certain critics have suggested he ought to have done, he might have involved Britain in ruin. "The last consideration present in my mind," he writes, "was the danger involved in leaving too much to chance in a Fleet action, because our Fleet was the one and only factor that was vital to the existence of the Empire, as, indeed, to the Allied cause. We had no reserve outside the Battle Fleet which could in any way take its place should disaster befall it, or even should its margin of superiority over the enemy be eliminated." During the night Jellicoe placed his fleet between the enemy and their base, but they escaped in a badly mauled condition.

The battle of Jutland conclusively proved that the German ships were more efficiently protected, and their gunners provided with better armour-piercing projectiles. Both these very serious defects were afterward remedied. Of the battleships, the *Marlborough* was not hit by shell, but torpedoed under the fore bridge, the *Barham* was hit twice, the *Colossus* three times, and the *Malaya* eight times; of the battle-cruisers, the *Lion* was struck twelve times, the *Princess Royal* nine times, the *Tiger* four times, and the *New Zealand* and *Indomitable* once; of the light cruisers, the *Castor*, the *Dublin*, and the *Calliope* were hit in several places, the *Chester* seventeen times, and the *Falmouth*, the *Galatea*, and the *Canterbury* once.

The British lost six big ships and eight destroyers, the complete force consisting of twenty-four Dreadnoughts, ten attached cruisers, eight battle-cruisers, twelve light cruisers, eight vessels of the 1st and 2nd Cruiser Squadrons, six ships of the Light Cruiser Squadron, and seventy-eight destroyers. Out of a total of twenty-five German battleships (including seventeen Dreadnoughts), five battle-cruisers, eleven light cruisers, and seventy-seven destroyers, twelve battleships, all the battle-cruisers, and ten light cruisers were hit or sustained damage by splinters of bursting shell. The *Ostfriesland*, a battleship, was mined, and the *König* badly battered. Of the battle-cruisers, the *Lützow* was hit at least forty times, torpedoed twice, and finally destroyed by her crew when in a sinking condition; the *Seydlitz* was hit by twenty-eight shells and one torpedo, and had to be beached in the Outer Jade, preparatory to getting her into dock. The *Derfflinger* apparently took nearly six

months to repair, and the *Moltke* and *Von der Tann* were hit. Four light cruisers, five destroyers, and one submarine were sunk. The casualties of the enemy numbered 3076, including 2414 killed or missing, while 5241 British officers and men lost their lives—nearly twelve times as many as at Trafalgar. Rear-Admirals Hood and Arbuthnot were numbered among the gallant dead. Although the British had a large force, the Germans actually had more vessels in action than Jellicoe.

On the 19th August the German squadrons again appeared in the North Sea, but speedily returned to port on discovering that the British were in considerable strength. On this occasion two light cruisers, the *Nottingham* and the *Falmouth*, were torpedoed by submarine.



CHAPTER XXIII

The Battlefields of 1917

BEFORE the British Army showed aggressive activity in 1917 it had taken over more of the French line, and Nivelle had succeeded Joffre, bringing with him new plans of operation. Haig's front now extended for about 120 miles. Although the batteries were well provided with ammunition, "the gun situation was a source of constant anxiety." At the battle of Arras, for instance, British gun-power was predominant; in the autumn the conflict about Ypres "was one of intense struggle for artillery supremacy," to quote Haig's dispatch, and in the winter the enemy was able, thanks in no small measure to the breakdown of Rumania and Russia, to claim superiority. Fortunately our inferiority was speedily remedied.

Raids and attacks on both sides were prevalent during January. As a result of the month's operations over 1000 prisoners were taken by the British and useful gains made on the high ground about Beaumont-Hamel. The process of 'nibbling,' as Joffre termed it, continued with satisfactory results in February, a considerable number of villages falling to the attacking troops. Following the bombardment

of the Le Transloy–Loupart line on the 11th March, it was found that the invaders had abandoned their entire trench system there and were falling back to the elaborate network of defences known as the Hindenburg Line on a front extending from Arras to Soissons, evacuating some 1300 square miles of territory in the process.

The retirement was followed up by the Allies, comparatively slight resistance only being offered. Bapaume, Péronne, and over a hundred villages were regained. Then the pace became slower and the enemy stiffened. The battle of Arras, an offensive having Lens, Cambrai, and St Quentin as its principal objectives, opened on the 9th April. Vimy Ridge, still in the hands of the Germans, once again held the attention of friend and foe. Position after position was stormed, and although orders had been issued that the defenders were to resist to the last man, the dominating heights were carried in a truly magnificent manner by the Canadian Corps under Sir Julian Byng. As the fight progressed and developed, tanks and cavalry were brought into action. The former were particularly useful in tearing down the exceptionally formidable wire entanglements at the southern end of the Hindenburg Line, enabling the Australians to push as far as Riencourt-lez-Cagnicourt, while English troops reached Bullecourt. These successes were negatived by a heavy German counter-attack which outflanked the Colonials and drove the British from the village. Over 700 Australians were taken prisoners. Bullecourt was subsequently retaken on the 17th May. Elsewhere the battle was progressing satisfactorily, the discomfort of rain, sleet, snow, and

mud failing to damp the enthusiasm of the victorious troops. Allenby's 3rd Army had practically secured the Scarpe heights. Within a month 19,500 enemy officers and men were made prisoners, and 98 heavy guns, 159 field-guns, 227 trench mortars, and 464 machine-guns captured, in addition to a rich haul of other booty.

During these operations the French had taken the offensive on the Aisne. Much was expected of it, but it ended in comparative failure, costing Nivelle his command. He was succeeded by Pétain, and Foch became Chief of Staff.

The fight at Messines which heralded the third battle of Ypres was a one-day conflict, carried out by Plumer's 2nd Army, which recovered nine miles and won Hill 60, Wytschaete, Messines, and the historic ridge. On the 7th June 600 tons of explosives carefully laid by tunnelling companies in the high ground were blown up, and a great concentration of gun-fire heralded the advance of Anzacs and British. Major Willie Redmond fell while gallantly leading the Irish, one of about 16,000 who were killed or wounded in the attacking force on this day of victory. Some 7200 German officers and men were captured, and sixty-seven guns, ninety-four trench mortars, and nearly 300 machine-guns fell into our hands. Three days later a disastrous set-back occurred on the sand-dunes between Nieuport and the sea, when the Northamptons and the King's Royal Rifles were virtually wiped out after a gallant resistance, seventy men only escaping.

When Haig began his attack at Ypres on the 31st July in a sea of mist it was evident that the best

weather had gone. Pétain was against an offensive; the British commander, now a Field-Marshal, was anxious to secure the Belgian coast because it had obvious strategical advantages, and would do much to secure the defeat of the intensive submarine campaign based on Belgian ports. Over 23,000 tons of artillery ammunition were hurled at the Germans on the first day, the *personnel* of the guns amounting to over 80 per cent. of the infantry engaged in the principal attack.

"This offensive," says Haig, "maintained for three and a half months under the most adverse conditions of weather, had entailed almost superhuman exertions on the part of the troops of all arms and services. The enemy had done his utmost to hold his ground, and in his endeavours to do so had used up no less than seventy-eight divisions, of which eighteen had been engaged a second or third time in the battle, after being withdrawn to rest and refit. Despite the magnitude of his efforts, it was the immense natural difficulties, accentuated manifold by the abnormally wet weather, rather than the enemy's resistance, which limited our progress and prevented the complete capture of the ridge."

This protracted struggle for the Passchendaele Ridge, defended by fortified farms, nests of machine-guns, cemented strongholds known as 'pill-boxes,' and extraordinary mazes of entanglements, was carried out in abominable weather, which necessarily hampered the troops, and may be regarded as the chief reason why the advance from Ypres was not completely successful. But Haig claims that, "given a normally fine August, the capture of the whole ridge

within the space of a few weeks was well within the power of men who had achieved so much." By the end of November the captured positions had been consolidated, and the enemy only retained the northern end of the ridge. Over 24,000 prisoners had been taken, besides 74 guns, 138 trench mortars, and 941 machine-guns. In August Pétain restored the line at Verdun, and in October the ridges north of the Aisne had been cleared of the enemy.

A very clever operation which promised far-reaching results was begun on the 20th November by Sir Julian Byng, who had taken Allenby's place as commander of the 3rd Army on the latter's leaving for Egypt. He advanced on Cambrai on a front of about six miles without any preliminary bombardment. A large number of tanks were used to smash the enemy's wire and to cover the advance of the infantry. At the same time the Germans were liberally dosed with gas, smoke, and shell, and subsidiary attacks were launched elsewhere.

The main system of the 'impregnable' Hindenburg Line and its outer defences were broken through. Fierce fighting took place at Lateau Wood, which took several hours to clear, but was rewarded by the capture of the German batteries. The villages of Ribecourt, Havrincourt, Masnières, and Marcoing were captured, but at Flesquières machine-guns and a brick wall skirting the château proved tough obstacles to progress. Here also a number of British tanks were knocked out, the village remaining in the possession of the enemy. The destruction of a bridge at Masnières, completed by a tank falling through it into the canal, prevented the cavalry from pursuing the

enemy in sufficient strength to overcome the resistance offered. A squadron of the Fort Garry Horse, Canadian Cavalry Brigade, succeeding in crossing on

a temporary structure, and did considerable execution until most of the horses were killed or wounded, their riders taking up a position in a sunken road until nightfall enabled them to retire. Masnières was cleared in the evening.

The 62nd (West Riding) Division carried the Hindenburg Reserve Line north of Havrincourt, and Anneux was entered by both cavalry and infantry. The Ulster battalions, keeping touch with these troops, also did excellent work by capturing the trench systems west of the Canal du Nord as far as the Bapaume–Cambrai road. Before darkness had set in three systems had been penetrated to a depth of some four and a half miles and over 5000 prisoners captured. Some 700 Germans were taken in the subsidiary operations at Bullecourt, where the remainder of the Hindenburg support trench on that front was secured.

To retrieve the set-back at Flesquières was part of the programme of the 21st. By 8 a.m. the village had been captured. The day was made up of stiff fighting in all directions, the result of which was not nearly so evident as on the 20th. While Anneux and Cantaing were seized, the attack on Bourlon Wood had only been partially successful, and the enemy still possessed Bourlon Ridge, the loss of which "would probably cause the abandonment by the Germans of their carefully prepared defence systems for a considerable distance to the north of it."

Bourlon Wood was captured on the 23rd. The enemy counter-attacked again and again, only to be driven back, and on the following day the village of Bourlon was added to the conquest, to be regained by the enemy on the 25th. At the end of the month the Germans continued to hold Fontaine-notre-Dame, Bourlon village, and the greater part of the ridge; but 10,500 officers and men had surrendered, and 142 guns, 70 trench mortars, about 350 machine-guns, and much ammunition had been taken.

In England there was bell-ringing and rejoicing; optimists promptly proceeded to forecast the speedy collapse of Germany. This proved to be premature, for on the 30th the tables were turned, and the enemy sprang something of a surprise on us. Although we had been warned by considerable activity on the part of the Germans, the troops at the northern end of the Bonavis Ridge and in the Gonnelieu sector were overwhelmed in the mist. The advancing host, assisted by aeroplanes which fired on the trenches and by much expenditure of gas, smoke bombs, and shells, progressed without much difficulty, though some of the gunners and infantry put up a fine fight. Villers-Guislain, Gonnelieu, Bonavis, and Gouzeaucourt were taken, together with a number of guns.

British reinforcements were rushed up. Men working on the railway secured rifles and helped, the 5th Cavalry Division, resting miles in the rear, flung themselves into the breach with the Guards, likewise hurriedly sent for, and tanks about to refit entered the conflict. Gouzeaucourt was recaptured.

The enemy's main attack, carried out in successive waves between Fontaine-notre-Dame and Tadpole Copse, south-west of Mœuvres, was a costly failure. Following renewed attacks, Masnières and Bourlon Wood were evacuated by the British. The new line taken up on the 7th December was between two and two and a half miles in front of that held previous to the attack three weeks before.

The material results are summed up by Haig as follows: "We had captured and retained in our possession over 12,000 yards of the former German front line from La Vacquerie to a point opposite

Boursies, together with between 10,000 and 11,000 yards of the Hindenburg Line and Hindenburg Reserve Line and the villages of Ribecourt, Flesquières, and Havrincourt." Over 11,000 prisoners had been taken, and 145 guns. "On the other hand, the enemy had occupied an unimportant section of our front line between Vendhuille and Gonnelieu." Incidentally, several German divisions that were to have been sent to reinforce the Austrians against Italy were held up for a time by the operations on the Cambrai front.

Von Below's tremendous drive against the Italians was finally checked with British and French assistance on the line of the Piave, our southern Allies losing the fruits of two years' arduous campaigning, possibly a quarter of a million men, and 2300 guns. This disaster, coupled with the collapse of the Russian Revolution, which had at first aroused enthusiasm because it was regarded as the dawn of a better day for the people themselves and auspicious for the progress of the war, was a bitter disappointment. Yet there were compensations elsewhere. Chief of these was the knowledge that on the 6th April the United States Congress had declared war against Germany, following this on the 7th December by a similar measure against Austria-Hungary. Unrestricted submarine warfare in the

General Pershing

waters around Great Britain and France, which began on the 1st February, was mainly responsible for this momentous decision. At the end of the year Uncle Sam had 1,500,000 men training, and 194,000 troops in France under the command of General J. J. Pershing. The 1st Division of the U.S. Regular Army marched into the trenches on the 23rd October, occupying a sector in Lorraine.

Farther afield there was also cause for thankfulness. In Mesopotamia, not only had Kut-el-Amara been recaptured on the 24th January, but Baghdad, a city of 200,000 inhabitants, was entered by the Indo-British forces on the 11th March, and Samarra, the terminus of the railway, was occupied on the 23rd of the following month. In the autumn operations a Turkish force entrenched at Ramadie, on the Euphrates, was defeated and surrendered on the 29th September, while the enemy was routed at Tekrit, on the Tigris, on the 5th November. The efficiency of General Maude's organization was abundantly evident, and although his main work was necessarily in connexion with military operations, his administrative achievements gained for him the confidence of the natives, who regarded him as their Heaven-sent deliverer. The death of this very gallant officer from cholera on the 18th November was the direct result of his kindly nature. He visited a plague-stricken area in Baghdad, and was offered hospitality, which he did not refuse for himself, although he had forbidden his escort to eat or drink.

By devoting the whole of his abundant energy to his country, Maude died a poor man. In grateful acknowledgment of his brilliant services Parliament

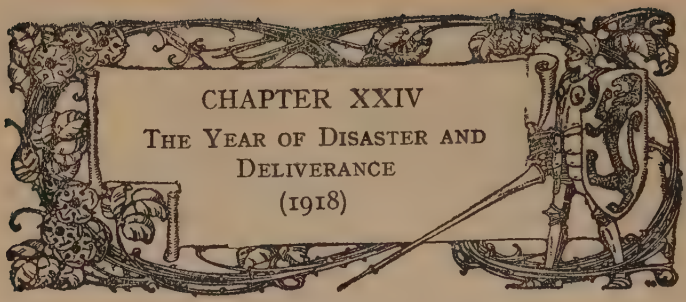
voted a grant of £25,000 to his widow and family. General Marshall was now appointed to the chief command.

Sir Archibald Murray finally cleared Sinai of the Turks by his victory at Rafa on the 9th January. To this frontier port the railway was pushed by the middle of March, and preparations were made for the invasion of the Holy Land. He attacked Gaza on the 26th, but although the New Zealand Light Horse entered the streets, and the hill called Ali Muntar, associated with Samson, was carried, the British had not sufficiently established their positions to hold the town. The battle was resumed on the 27th, by which time the enemy had received reinforcements, and there was a lamentable lack of water. The troops were therefore withdrawn preparatory to a second attempt. This was made with additional forces on the 17th April, and again a check was sustained. Murray, less fortunate than Alexander the Great and Napoleon, was recalled, and the command given to Allenby. By making demonstrations at Gaza, the latter led the Turks to believe that a third attempt was to be made against the town, instead of which he struck at Beersheba, which fell on the last day of October. He then definitely attacked Gaza, carrying the dominating height of Ali Muntar and securing the abandonment of the place on the 7th November. Pressing on, Allenby captured Ascalon, Ashdod, and other towns and villages, and secured Jaffa on the 16th.

While the British right advanced from Beersheba on Hebron, which fell on the 7th December, the left was pushing toward Jerusalem. The Holy City was isolated by the skilful disposition of troops, and sur-

rendered on the 9th December. Allenby entered it on foot two days later. The lion and her whelps had freed Palestine from Turkish misrule, and the menace to the Suez Canal was over.

German East Africa was conquered in 1917, although von Lettow succeeded in escaping into the wilds of Portuguese territory. In January Smuts surrendered his command to Hoskins, who occupied the rainy season mainly in reorganizing his forces. He had scarcely finished before his services were required elsewhere, and Van Deventer was appointed as his successor. There were still 9000 of the enemy in the field, their western column based on Mahenge, and the eastern column on Liwaye. A band under Naumann gave much trouble on account of its extraordinary mobility, but was eventually rounded up by South African, native, and Belgian troops on the 1st October, after having traversed 2000 miles in less than five months. In his retreat von Lettow put up a stiff four days' battle near Nyangao, the casualties on both sides being severe. Colonel Tafel, seeking to join forces with his commander-in-chief, was cut off, and surrendered on the 27th November.



CHAPTER XXIV

The Year of Disaster and Deliverance (1918)

THE old adage that the darkest hour is just before the dawn never received more convincing historical confirmation than in the waning and waxing fortunes of the Allies in the last year of the World War. Russia, to all practical intents and purposes, was out of the conflict. At Brest-Litovsk, in Russian Poland, delegates had begun to discuss peace terms on the 23rd December, 1917, and on the 3rd March, 1918, a treaty was signed which surrendered the provinces of Poland, Lithuania, Livonia, Esthonia, and Courland, in addition to various districts, the whole representing four per cent. of Russia's total territory and the greater part of her coal and iron areas. The lie direct was given to Germany's rodomontade of "peace without annexations and without indemnities." Russia was mulcted to the tune of £300,000,000, the commerce of the ex-Empire passed into German hands, and although Ukrainia and Finland became nominally independent, the Fatherland showed every intention of exploiting them to the fullest possible extent.

The Entente Powers knew perfectly well that divisions of enemy troops were being withdrawn from

Russia to the Western Front, and that as a natural corollary to the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk guns and ammunition, much of which had been made in England, would follow. The Americans were making elaborate arrangements, but their troops were scarcely likely to be in the field in sufficient numbers before Ludendorff had struck his blow. During the comparative quiet of the winter months the German soldiers had been drilled in new tactics to such perfection that the Staff were convinced they could not fail to batter down the resistance of the Allies. Peace would be dictated at Paris long before Uncle Sam's transports could arrive, even if they were fortunate enough to elude the U-boats, which nobody in Germany thought either possible or probable.

The British line now extended for 125 miles, an addition having been made by taking over trenches between Saint-Quentin and La Fère from the French. While aerial reconnaissances kept the Allied commanders informed to an appreciable extent of what the Germans were doing, British and French definitely assumed the defensive, remodelling old systems and creating new ones, and building roads and railways. Arrangements were also completed for the closest possible co-operation between the Allied Armies, though there was as yet no unity of command.

The impending storm burst on the 21st March. At least sixty-four enemy divisions took part in the opening operations, a strength considerably exceeding that of the British Army in France. The attack was launched on a front of about fifty-four miles, with the idea of driving a solid wedge between the French and the British Armies near the Somme. At dawn a

terrific bombardment, with high explosive and gas shell, of the fronts held by the 5th and the 3rd Armies from the Oise to the Scarpe, on the French front east and north-east of Rheims, and also in other sectors, was begun. So dense was the fog that the outpost positions were overwhelmed or surrounded. The British front line opposite La Fère was penetrated; Roussoy, Templeux-le-Guérard, Hargicourt, and Villeret were captured. Yet garrisons of redoubts and strong points in the forward zone offered a superb resistance for many hours. "The prolonged defence of these different localities," says Haig, "under conditions which left little hope of relief, deserves to rank among the most heroic actions in the history of the British Army." The 'battle zone' had also been entered at various places, the most serious breach being made south of Saint-Quentin, which necessitated the withdrawal of the 3rd Corps behind the Crozat Canal and of the 36th Division to the line of the Somme Canal. Other readjustments also took place in the Flesquières salient owing to the enemy's advance.

Mist again favoured the Germans on the 22nd. Crossing the Crozat Canal at Quessy, the oncoming hordes captured Tergnier, though it took them all day to win an exceedingly costly gain, and they were driven back at various other points. While Hervilly was retaken by the 1st Cavalry Division, Le Verguier and Epehy were lost. On the front held by the 3rd Army determined attacks were made on the Flesquières salient without success, but at Saint-Quentin the enemy broke through, and a withdrawal to the Somme was ordered.

The retreat, gallantly covered by the cavalry and

assisted by the French, went farther as the fight waxed more furious. The old Somme battlefield was crossed; a gap between the two armies was filled up by non-combatants, while a body of stragglers, engineers, schoolmasters, and others constituted the sole reserves of the 5th Army. On the 26th, owing to a mistake, the left flank of the latter was left uncovered, its sole protection being the river and an improvised force of 350 men with Lewis guns and armoured cars. The day was also notable for an event which had far-reaching results. Since November 1917 a Supreme War Council, without executive power, had watched over the general conduct of the war, and presumably its members had reported to their respective Governments, to whom the commanders and staffs were responsible. General Ferdinand Foch, who had presided over a committee of the Council appointed to deal with the matter of reserves, was now placed in supreme command of the French and British Armies in France and Belgium, an appointment which had Haig's loyal co-operation. "If Marshal Foch will be good enough to give me his advice, even his orders, I shall be delighted to obey him," Sir Douglas avowed. On the 27th Pershing chivalrously placed his troops at the Generalissimo's disposal for use how and where he thought best. Within a week the Germans had secured

Marshal Foch

no fewer than 70,000 prisoners, over 1000 guns, and had exacted a heavy toll of dead and wounded. "The Germans will be stopped immediately," Foch is reported to have said. "We have only to say they shall not pass, and I guarantee that they will not pass. It is not a question of evacuating Paris, which is a long way away. It is a question of stopping the Germans here where they are."

From the Forest of Saint-Gobain the Germans hurled shells into Paris with 'Big Bertha.' The 5th Army had fallen back to within a few miles of Amiens, which city was also under bombardment. A huge pocket had been driven into the Allied line at the junction between the French and the British. On the 28th a hammer-blow was struck at Arras, and parried by the British, who exacted heavy retribution; to the south the French retook Assainvillers, Boulogne-la-Grasse, and Conchy-les-Pots, and lost them later. The day's battle "ended in the complete defeat of the enemy on the whole front of his attack," so far as the British were concerned. Rawlinson was now back with his old 5th Army. Gough, who had undoubtedly done much to prevent absolute disaster, received the G.C.M.G. in June 1919, doubtless in tardy recognition of the fact.

On the 4th and 5th April Ludendorff made a last desperate effort to prevent the consolidation of the Allied line; it proved a costly failure. In the Somme battle seventy-three German divisions had been 'fought to a standstill' by forty-five British divisions, and some ten divisions had been used against the French.

The second German offensive was opened on practi-

cally the whole front from Lens to Armentières on the night of the 7th with gas shell, and on the 9th, again favoured by thick fog, the enemy broke into the trenches near Neuve-Chapelle, held by part of the 2nd Portuguese Division, and made rapid progress. South of this sector the 55th British Division maintained its position, and took over 750 prisoners in counter-attacks. As the battle of the Lys progressed ground had to be given, and Messines, Estaires, Armentières, Neuve-Église, Wytschaete, and Meteren fell to the Huns. The Ypres salient was gradually evacuated by the British, whose positions on the Passchendaele Ridge were held by outposts only.

In an order of the day issued on the 11th, Haig told his well-nigh exhausted troops that "There is no other course open to us but to fight it out. Every position must be held to the last man: there must be no retirement. With our backs to the wall, and believing in the justice of our cause, each one of us must fight on to the end. The safety of our homes and the freedom of mankind depend alike upon the conduct of each one of us at this critical moment."

In reply to the Field-Marshal's request, Foch sent French troops to assist their sorely tried comrades, and by the end of the month Sir Douglas Haig was able to assert that the enemy was "definitely held on both the southern and northern battle-fronts." In the Lys battle forty-two German divisions were used against twenty-five British divisions.

About 1500 square miles of territory had been surrendered, and the Allied casualties numbered some 300,000. It has been estimated that this big push cost the enemy half a million men in dead and wounded,

yet it had not given them Amiens and the road to Paris nor separated the British and French Armies, and the Channel ports were still intact.

For the next three months nothing of great moment occurred on the British front. The German offensive was renewed on the 27th May on the Aisne positions, between Rheims and Soissons. It principally concerned the French, but the 9th British Corps was also involved. It had taken the place of French troops who had been concentrated behind Amiens. The attack was delivered by twenty-eight German divisions, supported by tanks and aeroplanes, on a front of some thirty-five miles north-west of Rheims. There were only eight Allied divisions to oppose this formidable force. Small wonder that the Chemin des Dames, which had been won at the cost of many months of fighting, was lost in a few hours, and that the line of the Aisne was forced. The 9th British Corps lost heavily, and on the following day was gradually pressed back between the Vesle and the Ardre. A gap in the French line across the Ardre valley was filled up during the night by the 19th Division, which was brought up in motor-buses. Soissons, Fère-en-Tardenois, Oulchy, Neuilly, and many another place fell. The invaders were now back on the banks of the Marne. At Château-Thierry the Germans were within forty-four miles of Paris; but the Americans and French Colonial troops held the south end of the bridge, and the enemy were driven out of the town. In the darkness they attempted to cross the bridge, which the Americans had mined; those who were not blown to pieces were taken prisoners. Elsewhere the French blocked the road to the capital, as they had held it at Verdun.

As for the British troops who had been placed at Foch's disposal, their French General could have paid them no higher compliment than when he wrote: "They have enabled us to establish a barrier against which the hostile waves have beaten and shattered themselves. This none of the French who witnessed it will ever forget."

Another drive toward Paris was commenced on the 9th June, between Noyon and Montdidier, a front of about twenty-two miles. At appalling cost von Hutier made a gain of between five and six miles. Supported by tanks, the French counter-attacked on the 11th and 12th with splendid success, though they were unable to retain Choisy Hill. Again the German design had been thwarted. North of Montdidier, the Americans undertook their first important operation by capturing Cantigny; von Below failed to capture Rheims; the British had made useful gains and were prepared to take the offensive. As a consequence of these various drives, von Stein, the German War Minister, gave it as his opinion that great parts of the French Army had been beaten, and Foch's so-called Army of Reserve no longer existed. Either his Intelligence Department was sadly at fault or he was telling a deliberate lie. Within a few short weeks, in his own appointed time, the Thor of France was to strike in his turn.

Germany's final offensive opened on the 15th July on a fifty-mile front, the centre of which was Rheims. At one blow the enemy was to take that city, Épernay, Châlons, and perhaps Verdun. To the east the enemy made no progress against Gouraud's 4th Army. On the west they were more fortunate, though their advance

was slow by reason of the fine defence, and they were able to cross the Marne at several places. At Fossoy the Americans gave an excellent example of their fighting qualities by driving the Germans across the river. With their love of college yells and suchlike relics of the war-whoop, Pershing's troops attacked with fixed bayonets to the appropriate shout of "Lusitania!" By the evening of the 17th, French, American, and Italian troops had stayed progress on all fronts in this second battle of the Marne. On the evidence of the French Headquarters Staff, the Germans were blissfully unaware that "between Soissons and Château-Thierry, behind the sombre curtain of the Forest of Compiègne, a formidable counter-offensive had for weeks been in process of formation."

Three wedges had been driven in the Allied line in the region of Château-Thierry, Montdidier, and Ypres. Should the Allies counter-attack in great force, which seemed unlikely to the Germans, these salients might become pockets which could be sealed up and necessitate the surrender of the armies enclosed. Against the wedge having Soissons to the west, Château-Thierry to the south, and Rheims to the east, the whole forming an irregular U, Foch hurled his counter-stroke on the 18th July. It marked the turn of the tide. On a front of twenty-seven miles, from the west of Soissons to the north-west of Château-Thierry, the hammer struck with deadly precision. "The battle of July 18," Foch has since said, "was only the beginning of the good work. I did not know when the end would come: but I knew it would be the end. I never had a doubt. In war, he who doubts is lost."

There was nothing half-hearted about the fighting.

Moving barrage, tanks, aircraft, infantry and cavalry all had their parts to play, and played them supremely well. Steadily and relentlessly the Allied line was pushed forward, and the enemy waves receded. In two days over 20,000 prisoners were brought in, guns were captured, confusion became evident as the 'heavies' found their billets and dominated the roads. The troops of Generals Mangin, Gouraud, and Degoutte gave the Germans a foretaste of greater things to come. Again they recrossed the Marne, that river of evil omen to them. From the 20th until the 28th the British and French astride the Ardre faced a vigorous resistance, but advanced over four miles. To the south-west of Soissons the 15th and 34th British Divisions fought continuously until they were withdrawn in the first week of August. From time to time the resistance stiffened, fierce counter-attacks were made, reserves were hurried up, but the pincers were squeezing, and it became evident that the Boche now fully realized that if he did not get out of the neck of the pocket he would be lost. The enemy found time to sack Château-Thierry before leaving it, yet somehow this particular specimen of *Kultur* failed to arouse enthusiasm in the Fatherland. Soissons and Fismes were recaptured, fifty villages were restored to *la belle France*, and by the 4th the Germans had retreated across the Vesle. In recognition of the second victory of the Marne, Foch became a Marshal of France, and the Médaille Militaire was conferred on Pétain and Haig.

The second blow was struck on the 8th August by Haig with Rawlinson's 4th Army, the Canadian Corps and two divisions, and Débeney's 1st Army. "Within the space of five days," says the Field-Marshal, "the

town of Amiens and the railway centring upon it had been disengaged. Twenty German divisions had been heavily defeated by thirteen British infantry divisions and three cavalry divisions, assisted by a regiment of the 33rd American Division and supported by some 400 tanks. Nearly 22,000 prisoners and over 400 guns had been taken by us, and our line had been pushed forward to a depth of some twelve miles in a vital sector. Further, our deep advance, combined with the attacks of the French Armies on our right, had compelled the enemy to evacuate hurriedly a wide extent of territory to the south of us." In the same dispatch Haig notes that the "brilliant success of the Amiens attack was the prelude to a great series of battles, in which, throughout three months of continuous fighting, the British Armies advanced without a check from one victory to another."

Field-Marshal Earl Haig

The Germans never regained the offensive. In the large-scale enveloping movement that was the keynote of Foch's strategy many battles were won and none was lost. The battle of Bapaume, begun by Byng's 3rd Army on the 21st August, was responsible for the capture of nearly 35,000 prisoners and 270 guns. By the 2nd of the following month the Hindenburg Line had been reached and breached. In four weeks' fighting Haig's troops had taken 75,000 prisoners and 750 guns. Again Foch hit out in another direction.

This time it was at the Saint-Mihiel salient, where the Americans advanced twelve miles on a five-mile front on the 12th September, though the French stormed the bridgehead. Pétain and Pershing entered the town together. Toward the end of the month virtually the whole of the Western Front was ablaze, the Navy co-operating by a bombardment of the Belgian coast. Saint-Quentin, Cambrai, Armentières, La Bassée, Lens, Le Cateau, Lille, Roubaix, Douai, and many other places of bitter memory since 1914, fell in October. In Flanders the British, Belgians, and French pushed ahead, Ostend was abandoned, and on the 20th October no German remained on the Belgian coast.

On the 30th September Bulgaria had surrendered, followed on the 31st October by Turkey, and on the 3rd November by Austria. In the Argonne the enemy was offering a stiff resistance, and the Americans and French made slower progress than their Allies elsewhere, but they fought their way through. Ludendorff, the organizer of victory who had not been able to prevent defeat, resigned on the 27th October; the name of Hindenburg had already ceased to exercise its magic.

In order to prevent the possibility of the Germans withdrawing to shorter lines on the Meuse and holding on over the winter, it was decided to attack "a vital centre, which should anticipate the enemy's withdrawal and force an immediate conclusion." This task was entrusted to the British Armies. The battle of the Sambre began on the 1st November and lasted until the 11th. Valenciennes fell to the 4th Canadian Division. What Haig terms the 'decisive attack' was delivered on the 4th by the 4th, 3rd, and 1st Armies,

and extended for about thirty miles across difficult country, from the river, north of Oisy, to Valenciennes. The advance was like a consuming fire, despite stiff resistance. Obstacles such as the Sambre–Oise Canal were quickly overcome. In six minutes the Cameron Highlanders were across it and in pursuit of the enemy like the hounds in a paper-chase; New Zealanders captured the fortified town of Le Quesnoy; the 25th Division took Landrecies. Twenty British divisions 'utterly defeated' thirty-two divisions of the enemy, capturing 19,000 prisoners and over 450 guns. The 1st French Army continued the advance on the right. "By this great victory," says the Field-Marshal in his dispatch, "the enemy's resistance was definitely broken. On the 4th–5th November his troops began to fall back on practically the whole battle-front," and on the following day the Americans were in Sedan.

In drenching rain the land and air forces of the Allies kept close touch with the German retirement, which gradually became a disorderly retreat, though often enough the Boches fought with stolid desperation. On the 9th the fortress of Maubeuge was entered; two days later the 3rd Canadian Division crowned their efforts by capturing Mons and taking prisoner every living German in it, and the Belgians entered Ghent.

The German Army had run its course, and so had the Navy. On the 3rd November the latter had been ordered to sea, but the crews refused to work the ships, and the red flag was hoisted at Kiel and Wilhelmshaven. The revolution spread to Berlin; disintegration set in with the proclamation of Bavaria as a republic. The conditions of an armistice were requested of Foch on the 6th. These were stern but just, and

Entry of the Surrendered U-Boats into Harwich, November 20, 1918
E. S. Hodgson

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included the evacuation of invaded countries, the repatriation of their inhabitants and of all prisoners of war, the surrender of all submarines and the greater part of the surface vessels of the Navy, and the handing over of 5000 guns, 30,000 machine-guns, 3000 *Minenwerfer*, and 2000 aeroplanes.

The discipline and sacrifice of the troops, unity of command, the weight of America, the solidity of the 'Home Front,' the toil and hardship of hundreds of thousands of munition-makers, had achieved what seemed to be the impossible. Imperial Germany, which had sought to arrogate to herself the prerogatives of the Almighty, was humbled to the dust. Another Ahab and another Naboth's vineyard were added to the records of the world. "Not a single leader in our vast armies," said the Generalissimo on the day he was made a Field-Marshal of the British Army and received the Freedom of the City of London, "was wanting in the united rally against the enemy. We advanced against him together, shoulder to shoulder, without a set-back, though fully awake to the perils of the adventure. We reached our goal, the capitulation of the enemy, in the Armistice of the 11th of November." The genius who led the greatest armies of the world to the greatest victory in the history of warfare had also remarked on a previous occasion: "The hammer-blows of the British Armies were the decisive factors in the great and final defeat of the enemy."

In Russia the Allies supported the Czecho-Slovaks, soldiers of the north-western Slavic provinces of the Dual Monarchy who had been captured in the Galicia campaign, and had been granted permission by the

Bolsheviks to leave the country. This order was afterward cancelled, and the brave Czecho-Slovaks turned on the traitors. Japanese and American soldiers were sent to their support *via* Vladivostok, and British, French, and American troops were also landed on the Murman Coast and at Archangel, in the north. Arrangements for the withdrawal of the latter force were made in July 1919.

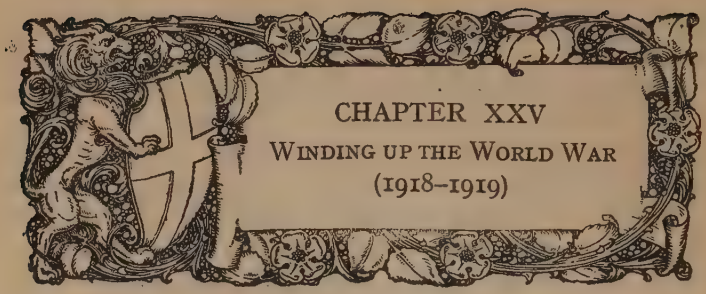
Field-Marshal Sir E. Allenby

In Palestine Allenby had continued his successful campaign, capturing Jericho on the 21st February, 1918. After retiring west of the Jordan in May and preparing for a big offensive during the summer, the commander renewed the campaign on the 19th September by completely breaking the Turkish line. Nazareth and Beisan fell on the following day, Acre and Haifa on the 24th, and on the 29th the Turkish 4th Army surrendered at Der'aa. Aleppo, the capital of Turkey in Asia, was taken on the 26th October. The enemy army in Mesopotamia gave itself up to the British on the 30th of the same month, and on the following day Turkey, helpless and hopeless, surrendered. With befitting irony General Townshend was called upon to assist in negotiating the Armistice.

The army at Salonica, long the butt of critics, was no longer moribund. Under d'Espérey the British, French, Serbian, Italian, and Greek soldiers who constituted it took the offensive in September. Within a

fortnight Bulgaria was suing for peace, and the Balkans were free.

Like their Allies on the Western Front, the Italians had regained the initiative, and with the aid of British and American troops Diaz drove the Austrians across the Piave and cut the lines of communication between the enemy armies. Trent and Trieste were entered by the Italians on the 3rd November. Some 300,000 prisoners and 5000 guns were taken during the conquest of the Trentino. The Dual Empire ceased to be on the 4th November.



CHAPTER XXV

Winding up the World War (1918–1919)

WE have seen how the hammer-blows of the Allies on all fronts shattered the military measures and genius of their enemies. The basis of this concentrated energy was sea-power. It held the trade routes and thereby controlled commerce, secured the lines of communication that enabled the Allies to bring reinforcements and supplies where they were most wanted, fed soldiers and civilians alike, and by means of the blockade limited the resources of their antagonists.

During the last two years of the conflict no great naval battle was fought. Action was principally confined to the realm of the underseas. The problem of the submarine was tackled in such a businesslike way that it completely shattered the faith of the Germans in that weapon. Germany had openly boasted of the impossibility of landing an American Army in France. The transports would be stalked and sunk long before they reached Europe. On the outward voyage two vessels only were sunk, and less than 300 troops were lost. Of the 2,000,000 soldiers who went from America to France, over fifty per cent. passed through England, sometimes at the rate of 200,000 a month. The con-

voying of merchantmen also proved extremely valuable, though from first to last Britain lost 7,638,020 tons of shipping, France 696,845 tons, Italy 742,365 tons, and the United States 341,000 tons. Zeebrugge, from which issued raiding destroyers and U-boats, was sealed on the 23rd April, 1918, by the sinking in the fairway of three obsolete cruisers loaded with concrete. At the same time a cutting-out expedition landed from the *Vindictive* and wrought considerable damage by destroying gun-emplacements and firing buildings, while an old submarine loaded with explosive was blown up and destroyed the jetty connecting the mole with the mainland. An attempt made at the same time to block Ostend miscarried, but was achieved by the battle-scarred *Vindictive* on the 10th May. Germany lost a total of 203 U-boats, and Britain fifty-nine submarines.

The aircraft menace, carried out with the same wilful disregard of legitimate warfare as the submarine campaign, was also conquered. No fewer than twenty-five raids were made on London during the war, of which seven were carried out by Zeppelins and the remainder by aeroplanes, the last being on the 19th May, 1918. It was a considerable time before the authorities got the measure of the invaders. Direct gunfire was the only defensive means at first, but later barrage fire and a number of anti-aircraft devices, including wire 'aprons' suspended from stationary balloons, were used with excellent results.

The Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Flying Corps were amalgamated to form the Royal Air Force on the 1st April, 1918. The expansion of the aerial arm from 1844 officers and men in August 1914 to

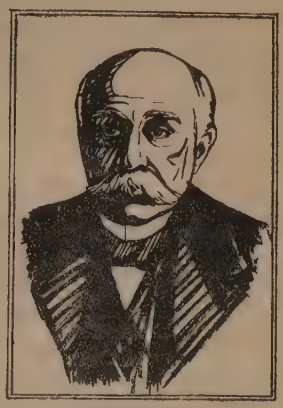
291,748 in October 1918, and from 272 machines to 22,171 during the same period, is perhaps sufficient to illustrate the growth of Britain's effort in this direction. The *personnel* of the three airships possessed by the Navy at the outbreak of war was 198, that of the 103 in service at the conclusion of hostilities numbered 7114. Complete records do not exist of operations in the air on the Western Front previous to July 1916. After that date 7054 enemy aircraft were destroyed or brought down, 6942 tons of bombs were dropped, and 10,500,000 rounds fired at ground targets. The Independent Force carried out many brilliant bombing operations over the Rhine. There were eighty aviation camps in England.

Captain John Alcock, D.S.C., and Lieut. Arthur Whitten Brown made the first direct flight across the Atlantic by aeroplane in June 1919, and were knighted by the King in recognition of their exploit.

The statistics of the war stagger the imagination. From the 4th August, 1914, to the 11th November, 1918, the British output of munitions included 35,000 field-guns and howitzers, completely equipped, 19,200 trench howitzers and mortars, 186,000 machine-guns, and 5,050,000 rifles. Trench-mortar and small-arms ammunition totalled 11,154,000,000 rounds, and 89,000 hand-grenades and 4,175,000 aerial bombs were made. From start to finish the country turned out 256,000,000 shells.

The British Empire raised a colossal army of 8,654,000, in addition to 450,000 naval seamen and 300,000 serving in the mercantile marine. Of these 658,705 were lost in the field and approximately 47,000 at sea; 359,145 officers and men in the Army were

returned as missing or prisoners, and 2,032,122 casualties were sustained. According to figures compiled by General March, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, 7,354,000 Allied and enemy soldiers were killed in battle or died of wounds, Russia heading the list with 1,700,000 losses, followed by Germany with 1,600,000. France mobilized 8,410,000 white and native troops and sustained 1,089,700 casualties, while 265,300 were returned as missing. The United States had 33,131 killed in action, 13,577 died of wounds, and the total Army and Navy casualty list was 299,548. Italy lost 465,560 soldiers and sailors, and 959,138 were wounded. Rumania's dead numbered 332,000.



M. Clemenceau

The war cost the world £40,000,000,000, according to the statement of M. Klotz, French Minister of Finance. The share of the United Kingdom up to March 31, 1919, was estimated in round figures by the Chancellor of the Exchequer at £6,700,000,000, after making the allowance annually taken for normal peace expenditure and for debts due from the Dominions and Allies. Canada spent about £255,454,600; Australia £291,000,000; New Zealand £75,750,000; South Africa £32,950,000; and Newfoundland some £1,880,000.

Britain's naval building during the war included fifteen battleships, five battle-cruisers, twenty-eight light cruisers, 176 destroyers, and 110 submarines.

The total tonnage of enemy merchant vessels of 500 gross tons and over captured by the British Navy and condemned was 322,202, and enemy ships of a gross tonnage of 319,316 were detained.

Germany signed the Peace Treaty on the 28th June, 1919. Following the suggestion made in a speech delivered on the 8th January, 1918, by Dr Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States, in which he set forth the war aims and peace terms of his country in fourteen points, Part I was devoted to the Covenant of the League of Nations. This was his fourteenth point, namely: "A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small States alike." It cannot be said that the Peace Conference was in any way guided by the first 'point,' which expressly advocated "open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind, but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view."

It is obviously impossible to give a *résumé* of the 440 articles of the Peace Treaty. The German army was reduced to 100,000 men and conscription abolished. The navy was not to exceed half a dozen battleships, a similar number of light cruisers, twelve destroyers, twelve torpedo-boats, and a maximum *personnel* of 16,500. Heligoland was to be dismantled, and the Kiel Canal thrown open to all nations at peace with Germany. The entire air service was to be demobilized, excluding only 1000 officers and men, who might be retained with 100 unarmed seaplanes until

the 1st of the following October. Their service was strictly limited to searching for submarine mines. Germany recognized the principle of replacing all merchant shipping and fishing-boats lost or damaged in the war. She also undertook to make compensation for all damage done to the civilian population of the Allied and Associated Powers and to their property during the war. The amount was to be assessed by a Reparation Committee of the Allies on or before the 1st May, 1921. Previous to that date Germany was to pay the equivalent of 20,000,000,000 gold marks.

The principal territorial alterations were as follows: Alsace-Lorraine restored to France. The Sarre coal-mines to be ceded to France, and the territory to be governed by a Commission appointed by the League of Nations, after fifteen years a plebiscite by communes to decide whether they desire to be associated with France or Germany. The entire independence of German Austria and Czecho-Slovania was recognized by Germany. In Poland, Germany ceded the greater part of Upper Silesia, Posen, and the province of West Prussia, on the left bank of the Vistula. The southern and eastern frontiers of East Prussia to be fixed by plebiscites. Northern and Central Slesvig to vote on the question of the Danish-German frontier. Treaties made with Russia and Rumania during the war to be annulled. Germany renounced all rights over Eupen and Malmedy to Belgium, and also acknowledged the full sovereignty of that country over Moresnet. No fortifications were to be maintained or built less than fifty kilometres to the east of the Rhine.

All rights and titles to colonies and overseas possessions passed to the Allies and Associated Powers, who

were given mandates for their government. Those under the disposition of Britain included German East Africa and Naura. The Union of South Africa was made responsible for German South-West Africa, New Zealand for the German Samoan Islands, Australia for other German Pacific possessions, excluding Nauru, and Japan for those north of the Equator. "William II of Hohenzollern, formerly German Emperor," was publicly arraigned "for a supreme offence against international morality and the sanctity of treaties." A special tribunal would be constituted to try him. The German Government also agreed that certain other persons accused of having committed acts of violation of the laws and customs of war should be brought before military tribunals of the Allies.

Right Hon. David Lloyd George, O.M.

Supplementary to the terms of peace, Great Britain and the United States entered into an agreement with France to go immediately to her assistance in the case of an unprovoked attack by Germany.

With the passing of the years much secret history of the war of 1914–1918 will be revealed. It will correct the errors of contemporary record, but can scarcely ameliorate the black crimes committed by Germany and her dupes in the attempt of the former to dominate the world. Nothing can justify the foul murders of Captain Fryatt and Nurse Cavell, whose

remains now rest in their native land, the bombardment of defenceless towns, the sinking at sight of merchantmen, the introduction of devilish devices in the field of conflict, the crucifixion of prisoners, and the massacre of women and children.

Of the many urgent problems of present and future which arise, more or less, out of the war, little can be written that would be useful. Labour troubles and bureaucratic muddles, prodigious expenditure and profiteering, will lead to revolutions, peaceful or otherwise. It will be the task of statesmen to avoid violence in the transition from the old order to the new. Their work will call for no less courage and wisdom than was displayed by those great leaders of the free nations, Mr Lloyd George and M. Clemenceau, during the four sad years of the World War.

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16